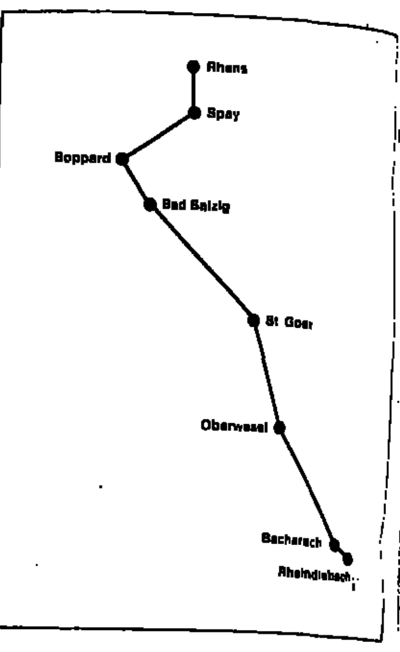
Routes to tour in Germany

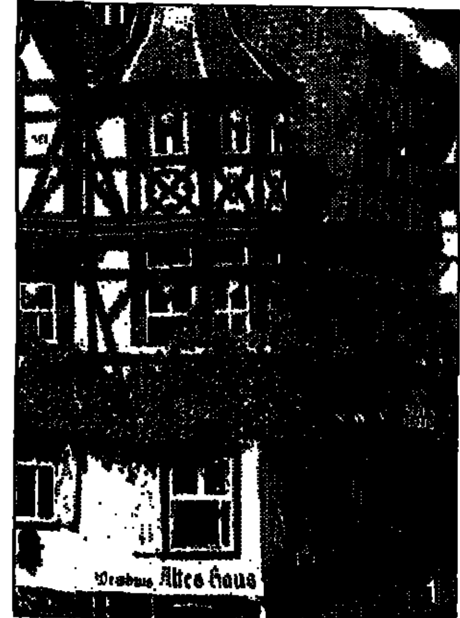


The Rheingold Route

German roads will get you there – to the Rhine, say, where it flows deep in the valley and is at its most beautiful. Castles perched on top of what, at times, are steep cliffs are a reminder that even in the Middle Ages the Rhine was of great importance as a waterway. To this day barges chug up and down the river with their cargoes.
For those who are in more of a hurry the going is faster on the autobahn that runs alongside the river. But from Koblenz to Bingen you must take the Rheingold Route along the left bank and see twice as much of the landscape. Take the chairlift in Boppard and enjoy an even better view. Stay the night at Rheinfels Castle in St Goar with its view of the Loreley Rock on the other side. And stroll round the romantic wine village of Bacharach.

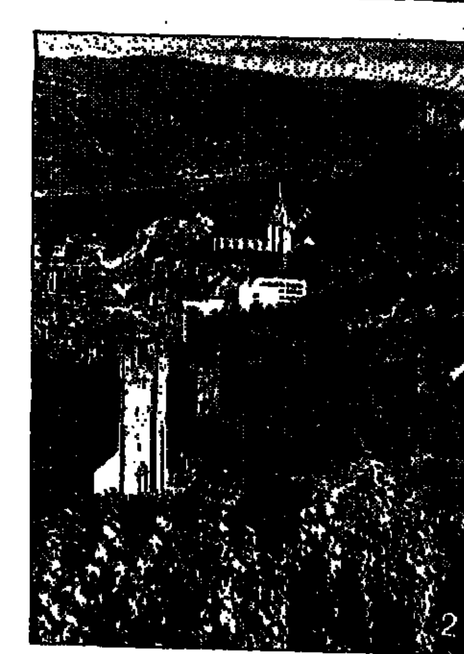
Visit Germany and let the Rheingold Route be your guide.

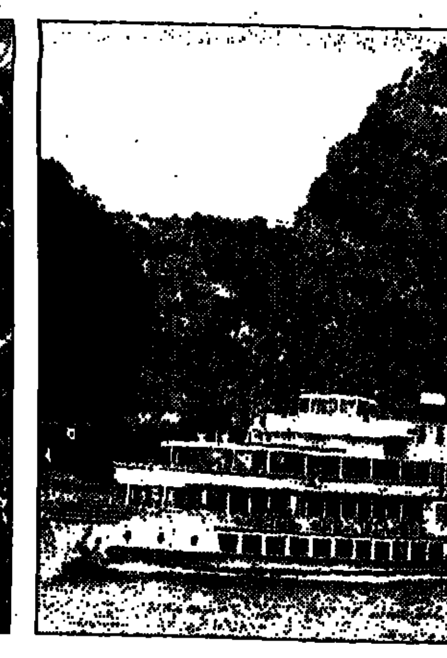


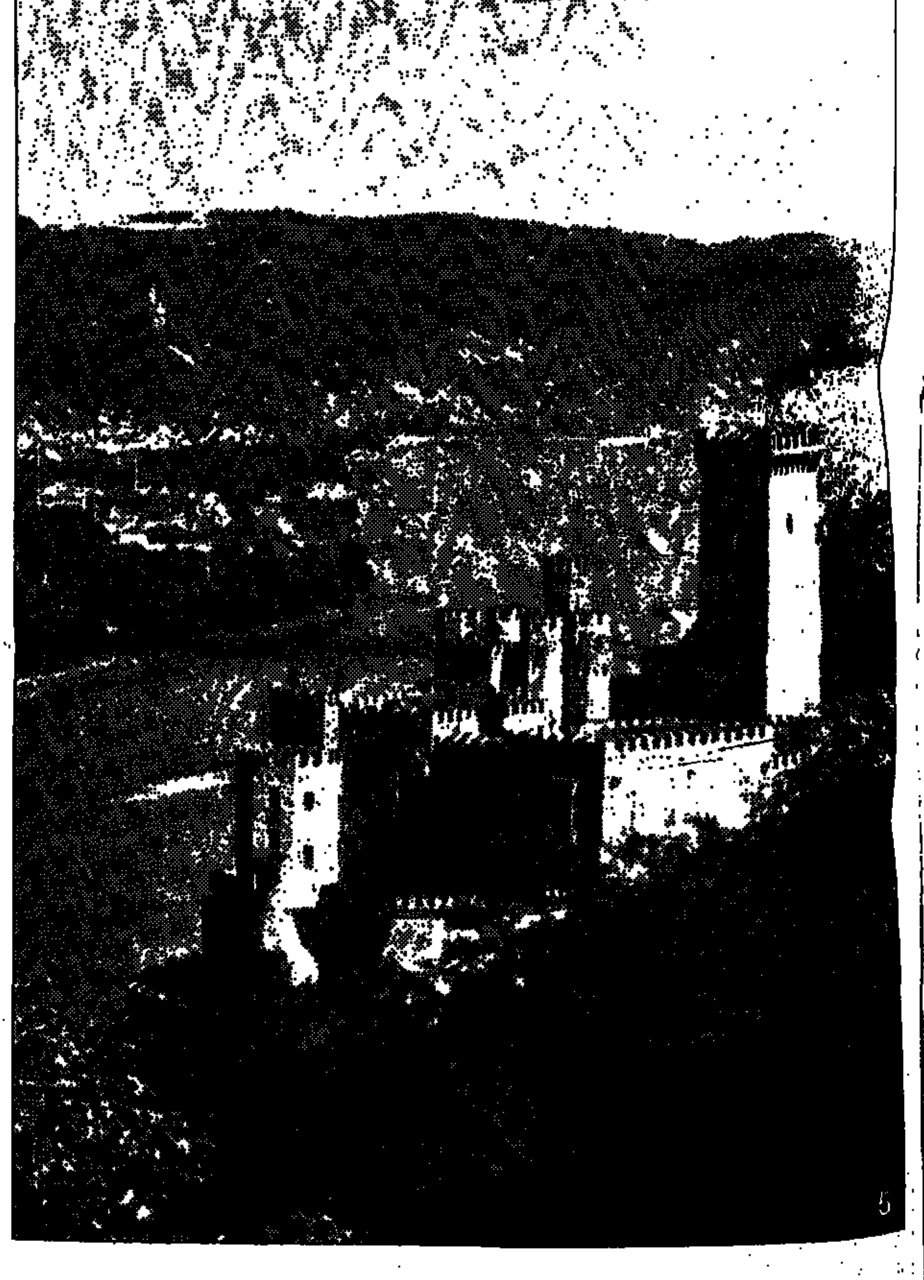


1 Bacharach
2 Oberwesel
3 The Loreley Rock
4 Boppard
5 Stolzenfels Castle

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Beethovenstrasse 69, D-6000 Frankfurt/M.









The German Tribune

Hamburg, 27 August 1989
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A dramatic turning point in European history

Frankfurter Rundschau

The world is now witnessing one of the most dramatic events in modern European history, the disintegration of the East Bloc, or socialist camp.

After decades in which it saw itself as a monolithic bloc, a unit in tune with the future, it is falling apart at a rate that only recently would have seemed unthinkable.

It is surely no exaggeration to say that this process of decay marks the end of an ideology that was considered the only valid creed in the world of "real socialism."

Nothing points more clearly to the change than what is happening in the second-largest country in the East Bloc, a grouping that is growing steadily more pluralistic and diffuse.

The nomination of Tadeusz Mazowiecki as the first non-Marxist Polish Premier since the war marks a historic turning-point.

Mazowiecki is a Catholic and a representative of a movement that was considered illegal as recently as five months ago. Martial law was imposed on Poland eight years ago to eliminate it.

His nomination as Premier is the most striking feature so far of a reform process toward which the way has been paved in the communist countries of Eastern Europe in constantly fresh starts and new approaches.

Yet in the final analysis none of them would have been able to come fully into their own had it not been for Mr Gorbachov's reforms in the Soviet Union.

What began in 1943 in the Cominform clash between Tito's Yugoslavia and the Soviet Union, when Belgrade rejected the Stalinist claim to hegemony and set out on its own road to socialism, has long assumed a new quality that reduces what happened then to a virtually negligible quantity.

Since Tito a rash of national communism has swept Eastern Europe. Neither anti-Titoist show trials ending in death sentences nor, later, revolutionary uprisings put down by force have ever succeeded in stopping the rot.

Yet in principle it was always a matter of reforming socialism and, within socialism, of an attempt to make communism more independent nationally, more efficient economically and, at best, more human in appearance.

Maybe the steps in this direction taken in August 1968 might have been aimed yet again at a healthy left-wing socialist tendency — if only the ossified, narrow-minded Kremlin leaders of the day had not failed so utterly to understanding the process of renewal that had begun in Czechoslovakia. Twenty-one years after the 21 August 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia by troops from five Warsaw Pact states, hardly any of the invaders — the Prague leaders and the GDR apart — now feel the decision to crush the Prague Spring was right.

What is more, it is now clear that the Brezhnev doctrine of limited sovereignty may have stemmed the tide of necessary change but that this ideological consideration has overtaken the Communists and is bowling them over as they try to solve the economic problems that have mounted up.

It is surely no coincidence that the intensity of the desire for reforms, up to and including the end of communism, is greatest and most advanced in countries facing the most serious economic problems (Rumania apart).

Developments in the Soviet Union itself are of crucial importance. What makes them unpredictable and still so dangerous is that national feeling as it comes to the fore is shaking to the foundations the cohesion of this last colonially structured world power.

If a setback were to occur in Moscow, which cannot be ruled out, that could call a halt to, or even set back the trend of, the process of reform in Eastern Europe.

But it would never be reversed to the point at which it can never ever trigger revolutionary tremors at some time or other.

Even in Poland and Hungary, where structural change of the political system has made most institutional headway, the final victory of democratic, parliamentary government is by no means assured.

Given the prevailing sentiment among the general public, a desire to settle accounts radically with the Communists in view of the long list of sins committed during their rule, a premature desire on the part of the Opposition as it bids for power to enjoy to the full its initial electoral triumphs might trigger communist resistance to the threat of totally losing power.

Even if reformers now seem inclined to admit that the invasion of Czechoslovakia 21 years ago was a great mistake,

Continued on page 2

A chink in the Iron Curtain

Hundreds of East Germans escaped to Austria from Hungary when they simply pushed open a gate in the border fence and walked through. Hungarian border guards were unable to stop the jostling crowds, the Hungarian authorities later explained. Hundreds of other East Germans have been getting out through Hungary by bus, train and car. (Photo: AP)

East Berlin maintains hardline over its would-be refugees

RHEINISCHE POST

The quest for a solution to the problem of East German refugees in Bonn's diplomatic missions in Budapest, Prague and East Berlin now shows signs of progress — although it is too early to talk of a breakthrough.

The East Berlin leaders have shown no sign of willingness to abandon their hardline and to hold out prospects to Germans in the German Democratic Republic.

Minister of State Rudolf Seiters of the Chancellor's Office could do little more in his first talk with the Deputy GDR Foreign Minister, than to sound out East Berlin's views and then report to the Chancellor in Bonn.

Herr Seiters, the Chancellor's emissary, has a tough mission. New approaches must be sought now the GDR has refused even to give benevolent consideration to exit permit applications by the refugees holed up in Bonn's diplomatic missions.

That talks are being held at all at a high political level must be considered progress. But Bonn must not just be interested *in arriving at a solution to the* problem posed by refugees who have chosen to squat in Bonn's embassies in Budapest and Prague and its mission in East Berlin.

That would be too short-sighted. Sooner or later more GDR people wanting to go to the West will try their luck at one of Bonn's diplomatic missions.

In intra-German talks it is not enough to treat the symptoms.

Long-term prospects must be found that relieve Germans in East Germany of the sense of despair that prompts them to escape to the West.

Bonn and East Berlin must thus clarify fundamentals. So a swift success need not be expected. It is doubtful whether a result may be achieved that will perceptibly ease living conditions for people in the GDR.

There are still no specific signs that the GDR *leaders in East Berlin are* prepared to play ball. Chancellor Kohl is prepared to make direct contact with Herr Honecker if need be due to a worsening of the situation, but he rightly rules out a visit to the GDR at present.

That would bring Bonn nowhere nearer to its objective. Besides,

Continued on page 4

IN THIS ISSUE

■ INTERNATIONAL

Germany 'must not shun an active Middle East policy'

Frankfurter Allgemeine

Arthur James Balfour, British Foreign Secretary from 1916 to 1919, has gone down in history for his Balfour Declaration on the future of Palestine.

In a letter dated 2 November 1917 and written to the Zionist leader, Lord Rothschild, Balfour wrote that His Majesty's government was well disposed toward the establishment of a national home for the Jews in Palestine.

It would do its best to make this objective easier to attain "but, you will appreciate, nothing must be done that might prejudice the civil and religious rights of existing non-Jewish communities in Palestine or jeopardise the rights and political status of Jews in other countries."

The Zionists used this declaration as a formal basis for their efforts to set up a Jewish state in Palestine, whereas it is condemned to this day by Palestinian Arabs as the starting-point of alien rule over their native country and as an expression of Western imperialism in the Middle East.

In March 1925 Balfour, then aged 77, paid Palestine, then administered by Britain under League of Nations mandate, his first and only visit.

He travelled there for the inauguration of the Hebrew University in Jerusalem. On his arrival the customs officer is said to have asked him: *"Have you anything else to declare?"*

Derek Hopwood, professor of Middle Eastern history at St Anthony's College, Oxford, told this anecdote at the annual conference of the British Society for Middle Eastern Studies in Durham.

Maybe, he suggested, it was time the British government issued a further declaration to the effect that Her Majesty's government was well disposed toward the establishment of a Palestinian state.

Arab-European relations were the keynote of the conference, held jointly this year with its French counterpart, the Association française pour l'étude du monde arabe et musulman.

In his Reflections on Relations between Europe and the Middle East Professor Hopwood also dealt with the allegation that the West had adopted a view of the East that had little to do with the realities of the situation.

"The Arabs," he concluded, "have adopted a view of Europe based on imagination and confrontation, just as the Europeans have adopted a view of the Middle East based on imagination and domination."

Many people in the Middle East had redefined their position in terms of Islam, which owed nothing to the West, yet were still at loggerheads with the West as they imagined it, he said.

He called this attitude the third stage, after importing nationalist revolution and socialist illusion from the West.

The Middle East, in his view, was more anxious than virtually any other part of the world to protect its cultural heritage — and felt threatened by cultural Westernisation.

Concepts such as dignity, authenticity and identity were associated with Islam. Yet how could a state be modern and liberal without being Westernised and dominated by the West?

In answer to this question Professor Hopwood referred to Iran, which was, he said, the only state that had tried to adopt an extremist approach.

If there is a gap in understanding between Europe and the Middle East, how is one to bridge it? "Orientalism" is not the right answer; it is a Western lesson, not a dialogue. It stresses distinctions and thus becomes a boundary and a limitation.

Yet Professor Hopwood was equally dismissive in ruling out "Occidentalism" as an approach to understanding.

In his view every educated Arab is to some extent an "Occidentalist," having absorbed some aspect or other of Western culture. So he ought to be prepared to enter into a dialogue with a European intermediary.

Both sides must redefine their relations, not attaching too much importance to the past. Professor Hopwood saw a number of hopeful signs that this was happening.

Udo Steinbach, director of the German Oriental Studies Institute, Hamburg, regretted that the Federal Republic of Germany was at present absent from the political stage in the Middle East.

There had yet to be any German response to dramatic changes there which had established new coordinates for a settlement of the Arab-Israeli or Palestinian-Israeli confrontation.

This silence in Bonn — on, say, the PLO's peace initiative — reflected, as he saw it, a malaise felt in Bonn on various occasions in respect of relations with the Middle East.

There were high Arab expectations of the Federal Republic's political clout corresponding to its economic ties with the region, but the Federal government had strictly limited room for political manoeuvre.

Bonn was trying to avoid anything that might further complicate relations with Washington in view of the part played by German firms in the construction of a chemicals plant in Libya and of the difficult talks with the United States on short-range nuclear missiles.

Steinbach mentioned as an instance of external pressure such as had influenced decisions in Bonn on previous occasions William Safire's *New York Times* commentary entitled "Auschwitz-in-the-Sand."

This article had shown what problems Bonn faced in its Middle East policy.

He mentioned for purposes of comparison the accusations levelled by former Israeli Premier Menahem Begin at Bonn Chancellor Helmut Schmidt for having served in the Wehrmacht.

Mr Begin's accusations were made in a bid to stall the export of German tanks to Saudi Arabia.

Bonn's relations with Israel have in Steinbach's opinion been the determining factor in German policy on the Middle East ever since the Federal Republic was founded.

"The Arabs were only considered marginally," he said. "Bonn expected them to show understanding."

He listed factors that made German policy toward the Middle East more difficult. They included Germany's past, the close ties between Israel and America, the Federal Republic's reliance on the United States, the complexity of the situation in the Middle East and the extraordinary sensitivity of German public opinion where Israel was concerned.

If the Federal government had nonetheless succeeded in drawing up and pursuing to some extent a Middle East policy worthy of the name, it had only been able to do so by virtue of the common European policy toward the Middle East.

This common European approach took shape in the early 1970s, mainly as a proving ground to show whether a common European foreign policy was possible.

Due largely to German urging, the "legitimate rights" of the Palestinian people, up to and including the "right of self-determination," had been included in a number of declarations.

The idea, Steinbach said, had then been to call for a solution to the German Question that was similarly based on the right of self-determination.

The Intifada and the Israeli response to it had intensified Bonn's dilemma. The Federal government had endorsed the condemnation of moves by the Israeli army in the 8 February 1988 European Community declaration, but bilaterally the German reaction had been "extremely guarded."

He referred to the agreement reached by all parties in the March 1988 Bundestag debate that the Germans must be "particularly tactful" with regard to these events and were not entitled to tell the Israelis what to do.

Ought the Federal Republic to pursue a Middle East policy of any kind? Steinbach mentioned three reasons why it should, as the Federal government and the Bundestag saw it.

The other two were economic grounds, such as German dependence on oil imports from the Middle East (although this dependence has declined, from 44 per cent in 1981 to 16 per cent in 1987), and German exports.

Outside the Western industrialised countries the Middle East ranks second only to Eastern Europe as a market for German exports. These economic considerations means that Germany has an interest in stability in the region.

The Federal Republic is not only affected by war and tension in the Middle East; it is also threatened by terrorist attacks and hijackings.

The special nature of German-Israeli relations ought in Steinbach's view not merely to find expression in declarations, friendship arrangements and an endless succession of visitors to Israel.

It must include political responsibility to safeguard Israel's existence by means of reconciliation with the Arabs. In the longer term Israel's security could only be guaranteed in part by military strength and external support.

Lasting security could only be achieved by means of compromise. Given its historic responsibility toward Israel the Federal Republic must not shun an active Middle East policy; it must commit itself even more strongly than others.

Wolfgang Köhler

(Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung für Deutschland, 17 August 1989)

Continued from page 1

surprises cannot be ruled out, as developments in China have shown. What is more, the heavy sacrifices people in Eastern Europe still have to make to either streamline their economies or muddle on with centralised economic controls may prove an unpredictable factor in the further course of events. Much is in a state of flux in Eastern Europe, including some changes of which not even the conservative dams built in Bucharest, East Berlin and Prague will be able to stem the tide.

Harry Schleicher

(Frankfurter Rundschau, 21 August 1989)

Lebanon: the carnage of a proxy war

Lebanon used to be hailed as the Switzerland of the Middle East, a rich country with a people who were prosperous and good businessmen.

A Christian as head of state and a Moslem as head of government formed part of a system that long guaranteed domestic peace. But that has been history since 1975.

After 14 years of civil war Lebanon today is a divided country, a military training ground for rival Middle Eastern states and uncontrollable terrorist organisations, an El Dorado of hostage-takers.

Its capital city, Beirut, is a smoking pile of rubble in which a mere 200,000 of what used to be 1.5 million people still live.

In one recent weekend 100,000 artillery shells, up to and including the heaviest, were fired at East and West Beirut. This is a figure reminiscent of days of full-scale fighting in both world wars.

The latest bloodshed has at least succeeded in reminding world opinion of the existence of the Lebanese tragedy. International opinion has ignored this organised mass murder for far too long.

France is prepared to mediate, the United Nations is to be involved. Whoever tries to put out the fires that are raging in Lebanon, it will be an uphill task and could rebound on the mediator.

The Israelis have already learnt to their cost that intervention is fraught with difficulties.

It isn't just a clash between Moslems and Christians, whose leader General Aoun has decided in a fit of megalomania to drive the Syrians, Lebanon's self-appointed protecting power, out of the country.

General Aoun is backed by Iraq, which is keen to settle old accounts with the Syrian "arch-traitor" President Assad. It is thus a proxy war, with people in the inferno that is Beirut footing the bill.

We must also recall how hard Iraq and Iran are finding it to end the devastating Gulf War.

We must remember that every ceasefire so far laboriously negotiated in Lebanon has been broken shortly afterwards and that terrorist organisations cannot easily be kept on a tight rein.

Lebanon for the Lebanese is a formula that might form a basis for peace, but who has the strength to sever the Gordian knot?

The sword is definitely not the right approach after 14 years of civil war. But what can diplomats accomplish?

Claus-Dietrich Möhrke

(Rheinische Post, Düsseldorf, 15 August 1989)

The German Tribune

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Good record, but can he punch? ... Töpfer. (Photo: Sven Simon)

■ HOME AFFAIRS

Eyes begin to turn towards election year 1990

Next year is general election year. SPD deputy chairman Oskar Lafontaine, the man who might be chancellor candidate, has announced the basis of the party manifesto. But first, Lafontaine has a preliminary bout — a CDU challenge in the Saar, where he has been Premier for five years. His opponent will be Bonn Environment Minister Klaus Töpfer. Topfer is regarded as a tough opponent but, says Joachim Penner, writing in the business newspaper, *Handelsblatt*, Lafontaine is likely to emerge unscathed. In the other article, Bernd Knebel reports in the Berlin daily, *Der Tagesspiegel*, that the SPD, if returned to power in Bonn, would: raise about 33 billion marks a year by hiking tax on energy; increase family-benefit spending; tax battery farming; and increase both fines for atmospheric pollution and tax on fertilisers and pesticides.



Boxing with much self-assurance ... Lafontaine. (Photo: Werek)

First, the preliminary bout

Federal Environment Minister Klaus Töpfer had been favoured to lead the Christian Democrats against SPD Premier Oskar Lafontaine. The decision is now official.

Saar CDU leaders meeting in Saarbrücken chose Töpfer in the hope that he will turn the tables on Lafontaine, who has been Premier for five years.

Their choice has yet to be endorsed by the *Land* CDU party conference, but that can be considered a formality.

Töpfer is anything but an unknown quantity in the Saar. His political cradle was in Saarbrücken, where he was head of planning under Franz-Josef Röder, CDU Premier of the *Land* for roughly 20 years.

He gained his first experience of constituency politics as CDU branch chairman in Saarbrücken-Stadt, where Lafontaine was busy laying the groundwork for his political career in the local CDU.

Dr Töpfer, an economist, toyed in the 1970s with the idea of joining the Saar Cabinet as Economic Affairs Minister, but Röder didn't need the services of the up-and-coming youngster at that stage.

So off he somewhat abruptly headed for Hanover, where he was appointed professor of regional planning at the University of Technology.

He soon returned to the south-west, however, as Environment Minister under CDU Premier Bernhard Vogel in the Rhineland-Palatinate.

There he made the name for himself that was to earn him promotion to Federal Environment Minister when Walter Wallmann left Bonn to take over as CDU Premier in Hesse.

This move to Bonn seems from the outset to have been subject to standing as CDU candidate against Herr Lafontaine in the Saar.

Chancellor Kohl has never made any secret of how glad he would be to see the CDU back in power in Saarbrücken.

The Chancellor wants to redress the balance of history — the Social Democrats won power in the Saar after long years of conservative government.

That is why the Chancellor and CDU leader wants a strong Christian Democrat candidate.

And the man he had in mind was none other than Töpfer — who is agreed even by political adversaries to have performed extremely well as Federal Environment Minister, which can be a volatile portfolio.

This mission in the Saar has grown even more important now Herr Lafontaine has come to exert political influence further afield and could well be nominated as SPD Chancellor candidate and thus Helmut Kohl's Social Democratic challenger in next year's general election.

That is why the Saar state assembly elections in January are of outstanding importance for the Christian Democrats and for the Chancellor. From the national level the CDU/CSU slogan must clearly be: "Beat Lafontaine in the Saar!"

But it is doubtful if this is possible. It is unlikely that enough damage at the polls will be done to upset Lafontaine's chances of becoming his party's Chancellor candidate or harm his general election prospects.

The Christian Democrats long failed to take him seriously. They didn't five years ago when he fought sitting CDU Premier Werner Zeyer and won.

They subsequently failed to do so when Herr Lafontaine set about influencing his party's policy at Federal level.

He is now incontestably the No. 1 in the Saar, and it would be little short of a miracle if Klaus Töpfer were to deprive the SPD of its overall majority in the state assembly and form a CDU-FDP coalition.

That is less to the credit of the SPD *Land* government's outstanding achievements, which on closer scrutiny are seen to have been strictly limited, than to the poor showing of the local CDU.

The CDU's party machine has been consolidated in the Saar by a young leader, Peter Jacoby, but at other levels the Christian Democrats still look in a sorry state.

In the state assembly they badly need restructuring, new faces and qualified manpower. But how to come by the new faces needed is a teaser that has yet to be solved.

Klaus Töpfer can certainly not take over a going concern in Saarbrücken. The political house that is his to take over is still not half completed. So his prospects of winning at the first attempt in January are poor.

If he and the CDU are to regain power in the Saar, then only as part of a more long-term commitment. Even if he fails to beat Herr Lafontaine first time round, Professor Töpfer seems likely to retain the Saar as his home base.

Failing victory at the polls in January he can be fairly sure of leading the CDU's state list of Bundestag candidates next year and to rank alongside Peter Jacoby as the leading Christian Democrat in the Saar.

Joachim Penner

(Handelsblatt, Düsseldorf, 14 August 1989)

Tactics for the main event

Perestroika, the reconstruction of industrialised society, is seen by the Saar's SPD Premier Oskar Lafontaine and the Social Democrats as a policy that will return them to power in next year's general election.

The way Herr Lafontaine, the deputy SPD leader, outlined the programme made it clear that here was a Chancellor candidate drafting himself a custom-built manifesto.

The immense programme of reconstruction "for a policy of ecological and social renewal of industrialised society" is entirely consistent with his political outlook and with his inclination to wager his shirt on a single card.

It is a far cry from the cautious electoral platforms drawn up by the last two SPD Chancellor candidates, Johannes Rau and Hans-Jochen Vogel.

Yet many Social Democrats will feel dizzy at the idea of a programme of ecological reconstruction totalling nearly DM33bn plus changes in family policy involving a similar amount.

The taxes planned to pay for the changes will hit many people hard. They are to be garnished in the manifesto with a number of populistic proposals designed to soothe the pain, such as a ban on low-altitude training flights by military aircraft, a levy on battery farming and the introduction of an autobahn speed limit.

For the SPD and Herr Lafontaine the success of this package will depend to a crucial extent on whether they can convince voters that the reconstruction of energy and family policies is not intended, in the final analysis, simply to raise more cash for government spending.

In theory the extra tax bill on energy will be offset by a corresponding increase in the basic income allowance (on which income tax is not charged).

A higher tax on motor fuel would raise nearly DM33bn a year more in revenue. The basic allowance, or income tax exemption, would be increased to benefit all income taxpayers equally by the same total amount.

Earnings after tax would increase, and as pensions are in future to be pegged to earnings after tax, pensioners would stand to benefit too — even though they don't, as a rule, pay income tax.

The same would apply to unemployment benefit, while society security claimants would be entitled to higher state benefits.

The Social Democrats further plan distance-related commuter allowances even for commuters who don't use their own cars.

Road tax on motor vehicles is to be abolished, transferring more of the tax burden to foreign motorists, who would pay higher tax and duties on motor fuel bought in Germany.

These plans are all neatly and convincingly interlinked. But what if the programme were to be implemented and German consumers were to save energy even more keenly than anticipated to cut costs?

The government would have achieved its ecological target but tax revenue would no longer include in full the extra DM33bn for which Bonn had budgeted.

How would the gap be filled? By taxing energy still more punitively, by increasing the VAT rate or by extra public borrowing?

SPD budget policymakers are expecting energy consumption to decline a little, but they have yet to decide what to do if it declines a lot.

Social Democrats and their supporters should have less trouble in coming to terms with the proposed reconstruction of family policy.

The proposed uniform lump-sum family allowance is a political bonus for most families. It is an old faithful of SPD policy.

Pegging married persons' income tax benefits to the number of children is another point that makes sound sense.

At present all you need to do to reap this particular tax benefit is to marry. At present, and unfairly, a father of several children forfeits it if his wife dies.

Industry is unlikely to man the barricades on account of a levy on battery farming, higher taxes on fertiliser and pesticides and higher penalties on atmospheric pollution.

The signs are that this is Oskar Lafontaine and the SPD calling on voters to put their money where their mouth is, to make sacrifices for the environmental protection they claim to feel is so important — and to vote SPD.

Even if there were to be unpopular strikes in, say, the engineering industry next year, Herr Lafontaine could claim a reputation for being a Social Democrat who is prepared to cross swords with the trade unions if need be.

There can be no doubt that he aims to take over power at the Chancellor's Office and that he has been planning to do so for some time.

Bernd Knebel

(Der Tagesspiegel, Berlin, 15 August 1989)

■ PEOPLE IN POLITICS

The imperturbable man at the Defence Ministry



Gerhard Stoltenberg is a byword for imperturbability, but he is quick to react if accused, no matter how indirectly, of lacking a grasp of his subject.

That was the gist of the criticism levelled at Chancellor Kohl's decision to switch Herr Stoltenberg from Finance to Defence, as part of his mid-April Bonn Cabinet reshuffle, in place of the luckless Rupert Scholz.

Scepticism was rife, both among the general public and in the armed forces, where the defence portfolio was seen as having been degraded to a punishment post for demoted politicians.

Herr Stoltenberg knew this and found it hard to suppress his annoyance.

He said: "What is all this talk about my being incompetent? I could have taken on the defence portfolio in Konrad Adenauer's last Cabinet."

Adenauer last held office from 1963 to 1965. Stoltenberg, now 60, has been Defence Minister in Bonn for 100 days.

Disbelief

Many observers in the Federal capital are rubbing their eyes in disbelief at how the clergyman's son from Bad Oldesloe, Schleswig-Holstein, has handled his new assignment.

In little more than three months Herr Stoltenberg may not have been able to generate spectacularly positive news about the much-maligned armed forces, but he has at least been able to keep them out of the news.

No news being good news in this case, peace and quiet have gradually been restored to a Bundeswehr that has long figured in too many headlines it could well have done without.

He has been lucky, of course, as the Defence Ministry is the first to admit. "A plane might have crashed, and that would have put the cat right back among the pigeons."

The way Stoltenberg works and runs the Defence Ministry is a complete change. He is not keen on publicity. The interviews he has so far given on defence and security can be counted on the fingers of one hand.

As long as he is not completely in control and is unable to clearly assess problems, risks and opportunities he prefers not to commit himself by making public statements.

But "Pentabonn" officials are working all the harder behind the scenes. One is reminded, in many respects, of Helmut Schmidt's days at the Defence Ministry.

In the late 1960s Herr Schmidt set up a think tank of Ministry eggheads to think over, review and prepare for major decisions.

It consisted of state secretaries and the Inspector-General of the Bundeswehr. It was neglected by, and largely forgotten under the aegis of, later Defence Ministers.

Helmut Schmidt's successors at Defence — Georg Leber, Hans Apel, Manfred Wörner and Rupert Scholz — all neglected delegating authority as a leadership, or management, principle.

Under Gerhard Stoltenberg it has staged a comeback, as have regular meetings of heads of department.

And should a Ministry official request an extraordinary interview with the Minister, he may be sure that Herr Stoltenberg will have read the paperwork that is to be the subject of discussion.

A Defence Ministry insider describes the situation as follows:

"Manfred Wörner tended to arrive at decisions, even major decisions, spontaneously — intuitively, as it were.

"Rupert Scholz relied on his marked ability to grasp at a glance the most complicated contexts. He didn't attach much importance to advice.

"Gerhard Stoltenberg always takes his time before arriving at an opinion, but he can then be relied on to have sounded out every conceivable aspect of the subject.

"He never arrives at a decision on the basis of paperwork submitted. He always discusses matters first."

As a result, both military men and civilian officials feel both upgraded and included in political affairs and decisions.

As one of them puts it: "We have been given a hearing, so we can't shun our share of responsibility afterwards."

This process of consultation even extends to minor details. No case has come to light in which an attempt was made to hoodwink Herr Stoltenberg. It would have been unlikely to succeed.



Consulting can be fun . . . Stoltenberg (left). (Photo: Poly-Press)

He reads carefully every letter that is presented to him before signing it. If it contains figures, he insists on having them checked for accuracy.

That is a far cry from his predecessor, Rupert Scholz, who failed to read in detail a Luftwaffe letter to North Rhine-Westphalian Premier Johannes Rau that he signed.

It led to the air show at USAF Ramstein, where hundreds of visitors were killed and maimed in a plane crash, putting Herr Scholz on the spot.

Herr Stoltenberg has a different approach to Parliament too. Immediately after taking his oath of office he invited the Bundestag defence committee to visit him.

In making this move his long years of party politics stood him in good stead. "He is well aware," as a close associate puts it, "how important MPs are. He attaches absolute priority to cooperation with the defence committee."

This outlook has enabled him to ease tempers that were frayed under his immediate predecessor, whose parliamentary experience was limited, and under Herr Wörner after the Kiessling Affair.

Even Opposition MPs readily admit that this is the case.

Herr Stoltenberg's careful nursing of relations with the Bundestag is naturally based in part on tactical considerations.

The problems he faces are enormous: manpower, equipment and finances. Without parliamentary support, or in the face of parliamentary opposition, he could be sure to fail.

A further advantage he can claim to enjoy over his predecessor(s) is his experience in dealing with *Land* Premiers.

The Bundeswehr debate has regional connotations in many instances. Trouble can often arise in connection with individual garrisons.

A Minister who knows the *Länder* and their peculiarities has a big advantage.

By the year's end he intends to have worked out at least the broad outlines of what lies in store for the armed forces in the years ahead.

Manpower comes first. No gifts of prophecy are needed to forecast that the Bundeswehr's peacetime manpower target of 495,000 will soon need to be cut back no matter what the outcome of the Vienna troop cut talks may be.

A reduction will result automatically from lower birth rates. Herr Stoltenberg has not yet committed himself, but closer scrutiny of his first Bundestag speech as Defence Minister indicates his line of approach.

Detailed consideration would need to be given to where existing decisions could best be "rectified."

Much the same applies to defence spending. His decision to pay warrant officers, captains and majors more is intended to make a career more attractive and to show where he thinks priorities lie.

Better pay and social benefits can only be awarded at the expense of capital investment — in new arms and equipment.

How are super-expensive combat aircraft to be paid for in the 1990s without allowing the army and the navy to grow long in the tooth?

These are problems Herr Stoltenberg will be mulling over during his summer holiday in St. Peter-Ording on the North Sea.

He can afford to take his time now he has taken the edge off the security policy clash with Hans-Dietrich Genscher's Foreign Office triggered by Manfred Wörner as Defence Minister.

Stoltenberg and Genscher, says someone who ought to know, may not agree on everything. But they are determined to make a success of the Bonn coalition.

Let there be no mistake about it: Gerhard Stoltenberg does not see serving as Defence Minister as having been put out to graze.

He has every intention of staying on as Defence Minister after next year's general election.

Gisbert Kuhn

(Rheinischer Merkur/Christ und Welt, Bonn, 11 August 1989)

Refugees

Continued from page 1

the Federal government must make it clear that the ball is now in East Berlin's court.

Bonn can gain nothing by force. All it can do is repeat, like the legend on a prayer wheel, that a solution to the overall problem must come from East Berlin.

There is, moreover, no need to upgrade the GDR regime in this situation, which a visit there by Chancellor Kohl would do.

Andreas Fritzenkötter

(Rheinische Post, Düsseldorf, 19 August 1989)

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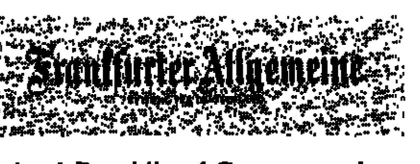
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■ PERSPECTIVE

The image of Germany in America: need to take a little more care



Most Americans see Japan and its economic power as a more serious threat than the Soviet Union; they feel they are condemned to look on helplessly as Japan snaps up sound US assets at bargain-basement prices.

Most American homes have some piece of electronic equipment imported from Japan; Japanese cars are popular with Americans; yet despite this familiarity with things Japanese, Americans have a feeling that there is something awesome and uncanny about Japan's economic expansion.

Japan spends $250m a year on a wide range of advertising in the United States to polish up its reputation with ordinary Americans, but to little or no avail.

Despite this discouraging example, the Germans now plan to follow suit and to invest public and private money in boosting the image of Germany in the United States.

After Bitburg, where Chancellor Kohl and President Reagan laid a wreath at a German military cemetery where SS officers are buried; after Libya, where German firms were allegedly involved in selling Colonel Gaddafi a factory capable of manufacturing chemical weapons; after the short-range missile debate and Gorbymania, as German enthusiasm for the Soviet leader was dubbed, joint public- and private-sector efforts are to be undertaken "to restore American confidence in the Federal Republic of Germany and establish a generally favourable climate of US opinion on Germany, the Germans, German products and services."

German advertising experts are starting with a mere DM20m from a fund financed by German industry, but in an emergency swift and specific advertising moves could be undertaken without extra red tape.

Other projects aimed at promoting US goodwill toward the Federal Republic, its culture and its products include extensions to the German pavilion at the Epcot (Disneyworld) Center, bankrolling TV documentaries, producing a multi-media show about the Federal Republic and Germany put across at school and in the Press.

As the "icing on the cake" there are plans to set up a Family History Center on Ellis Island.

The roughly 30 per cent of US citizens who have German forebears will be able to take home a computer printout listing their German ancestors as a certificate to enable them to gain a "better understanding" of contemporary Germany.

Public relations work will naturally continue to use the traditional channels of German-American relations, such as the embassy and consulates, the Goethe Institute, student and school exchange schemes, the Marshall Plan, the work of party-political foundations, the German-American chambers of commerce, the German Tourist Board and the German Information Center in New York.

More money, better conceived programmes, more frequent and more interesting speakers and platform debates are planned to heighten the effect and, above all, to make the success of this extra effort plain to see.

This concept was drawn up at Bonn's suggestion in the German embassy in Washington, D.C., and has been discussed with representatives of German industry without a final decision yet having been reached.

It is based on one assumption which is clearly correct: that Bonn, its politicians and its policies are poorly "sold" at present and that German public relations stands to benefit from a more professional approach.

Views differ, of course, on whether Germany as perceived by US public opinion is really as unpopular as is evidently assumed to be the case.

Views may also differ on whether the climate of German-American relations has cooled off so much that ties are growing more difficult and sales of German products are starting to feel the pinch.

There have regularly been times when a sour note has been sounded in German-American relations over the past 20 years, times when friendship, common values and alliance ties seemed to rate low on the scale of priorities.

In 1981, for instance, at the height of the clash over missile modernisation and the stationing of Pershing 2 and cruise missiles in Europe, Chancellor Schmidt was at the receiving end of as unpleasant a Press campaign and similar doubts as to his Nato loyalty as Chancellor Kohl and his coalition government are today.

Accusation

Then as now, the "Germans' quiet longing for the East" was pilloried and Bonn was accused of feeling it had closer links with the Soviet Union, as a European power, than with the United States.

Then as now, there was talk about US troop withdrawals, of burden-sharing, of loans to the East, of the weakness of the dollar and Germany's irksome trading surpluses.

It is worth recalling how incensed US public opinion was on learning that Chancellor Schmidt had bluntly and arrogantly given President Carter a piece of his mind.

German popularity sank as low as it was later to do in connection with the Libyan poison gas factory.

But serious surveys regularly show that a steady seven out of 10 Americans regard the Germans as firm friends who are earnest Nato allies.

The same goes for German companies and products as seen by US consumers. They continue to be held in high repute in terms of quality, reliability and after-sales service.

So maybe we would do better to be more at our ease when taking the temperature of German-American relations than to juggle excitedly with one new programme after another.

These new programmes will merely cost more than the numerous facilities which already exist and will no more be able than these existing facilities to bring about any fundamental change in the climate of relations.

Yet that isn't to say that more couldn't be done, by both the public and the private sector, to promote German-American relations.

Cash is arguably less important than personal commitment. Now the old guard has stepped down, men and women for who close and cordial transatlantic ties were a matter of course, there is only one German politician who has deliberately established personal contacts and nursed them by means of regular visits over the years.

High repute

Count Lambsdorff, the FDP leader, and his Mardi Gras visits are as much a part of Washington, D.C., as the Japanese cherry blossom festival.

His political analysis is held in high repute, his plain words are given a hearing and his advice is sought. He may be given to speaking his mind but no-one doubts his honesty and his firm commitment to the Atlantic alliance.

No other German party boasts a politician who invested as heavily as he has done in setting up close ties with America and can now fairly claim that his investment is paying sound dividends.

Most German politicians whistlestop round Washington. That isn't the way to establish ties that will weather periods when skies are grey.

The same goes for the younger generation of German businessmen. With few exceptions there is hardly one who keeps up regularly contacts with the Congres or with the US media.

There is hardly a German businessman who has close enough personal ties in the United States to be in a position to phone leading Congressmen to explain the situation, resolve misunderstandings and make sure no political damage is done in cases such as the Libyan poison gas factory.

If German businessmen and politicians are seriously interested in the psychological and emotional background against which German investment is registered and German products are bought in the United States, they ought to attach crucial importance to making and nursing personal contacts with leading decision-makers and opinion-formers.

A further factor applies to German firms with US subsidiaries. To be rated a good corporate citizen is more important and does Germany's public image in the United States more good than a either a multi-media show or the most ambitious TV documentaries.

A number of German firms, such as Degussa AG, in Alabama, have deliberately cultivated this image of good corporate citizenship for years and are acknowledged and appreciated in this capacity without having forfeited their German identity.

These are examples others would do well to emulate. Political cold spells are periodically inevitable. They will only do no harm against the background of a wide range of personal contacts and friendships that can be sure to weather the storm.

Carola Kaps

(Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung für Deutschland, 11 August 1989)

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■ AGRICULTURE POLICY

Strategies to combat over-production, rising costs and farm closures

Hermann Birnkammer, the author of this article, is head of the research centre for agricultural management and technology at Hohenheim University, Stuttgart.

How large an agricultural industry does a stable economy require? How large an agricultural industry can an industrial society afford?

Over the past 30 years, European policies have led to sustained surpluses in all important agricultural products.

Although demand has stagnated and even dropped in some instances, the trend generally is for production to increase. But, at the same time, agriculture's importance in the German economy has declined.

In 1957, it accounted for 7.5 per cent of gross national product (GNP). This has dropped to 1.5 per cent.

Agriculture employs only about five per cent of the workforce; in 1957 it employed 17 per cent.

In an affluent society, particularly among the city-bred post-war generation, there has been a change in values and attitudes.

People have become more concerned about what they eat. Society is no longer prepared to make special sacrifices for agriculture just because farmers find themselves in a poor economic situation.

Demographic changes also add to pessimism. There are almost 700,000 people working on German farms, but more than 200,000 of them are over 55.

The younger generation is leaving the land with the danger of what could be called "negative selection." This means that intelligent and competent young people are turning their backs on agriculture.

But that is not all. In 1993 the existing trade barriers between European Community member-states will be removed; the largest single market in the world will come into being. Agriculture apart, expectations will be high for greater economic growth and increased affluence.

German agriculture looks upon the most exciting development in the century with little optimism, primarily because competition in agricultural markets will be increased and because there will certainly be greater pressure on prices. Between 15,000 and 30,000 farms are closing down every year already.

There is overproduction on the one hand and farms being closed down on the other. There are plenty of suggestions for ways out of the situation and for reforms, most of them inappropriate.

Farmers' organisations call for political intervention for limitations and distribution of production on farms, linked to increased price support. The models for this policy are the measures taken with milk and sugar.

From the human point of view this approach is understandable, but it cannot be applied on a broad scale with the EC's 12 member-states.

The same is true for alternative product processes, for example organic-biological agricultural methods and for alternative uses for agricultural produce, in short farm produce as an alternative raw material.

Such courses of action could contribute to a solution to the problem for a certain period of time and in certain areas, for there is a lack of sufficient market and income potential to clear products produced expensively.

Agriculture is not helped much by putting its hopes in the hunger of the Third World. The hunger problem there can only be resolved by food production on the spot.

Three possible courses of action can be described as serious propositions. First: a consistent, free-market agriculture policy; second: free-market ecology policy; and, third: a free-market social agriculture policy.

None will solve all the problems all at once — but a systematic presentation would help to clarify the starting-point for applying the policy and make clear the economic consequences of the respective policies.

The "classic" free-market strategy would be favoured by economists and interest groups outside agriculture; trade and industry associations, trades unions and consumer associations.

In this instance the preferred instrument is the control of supply and demand by price. This means maintaining low prices for so long as the weakest operations were squeezed out of production and until high supplies have adjusted to demand.

The result would be a dramatic structural change, for more than a half of German farms would not survive.

The problem with such a kill-or-cure policy is of an economic nature in every way.

In the countryside there is a lack of jobs for those who leave agriculture. Consequently those who get out of the industry move down the social ladder — for many the only solution is to move away.

In addition farmers would suffer an enormous decline in the value of their property. Land prices would fall steeply



and many investments made in the past would turn out to be, in the event, a mistake.

The countryside would suffer from this irreparable losses in land suitable for cultivation.

There are undesirable results from set-aside policies. Land which is the least profitable would be taken out of production, but probably there would be increased use of the remaining land.

Set-aside solutions, however, imply not only cutting back production potential but also reducing waste management potential, because in this method land is lost for recycling animal excrement. This intensifies the tensions between economic and ecological considerations.

This would result in sustained changes in "working on the farm in spare-time." Lower prices for agricultural produce would mean that it would no longer be worthwhile for smallholders to work their land. Part-time farming activities would lose their transitional and buffer function which has facilitated structural changes in the past.

In many regions the aspect of the countryside would change fundamentally. In place of land developed and cultivated by man, stretches of the countryside would become fallow areas and develop into a region uniform in environmental conditions and in its population of animals and plants for which it is a habitat, that is a "monostructured biotope."

The ecological quality of land is harmed as a consequence, despite allowing land to remain fallow.

The free-market ecological strategy is aimed at going ahead with production methods which are ecologically tolerable through political intervention.

The use of aids to agriculture such as fertilizers and pesticides would be limited, and to some extent banned, by legislation, regulations and other conditions.

The identification of new water, agricultural and nature reserves would place public before private interests, particularly valuable biotopes and areas of ecological importance would be taken completely out of agricultural production.

Farmers, for whom this policy would in effect be equivalent to expropriation, would be compensated in part with taxpayers' money.

Farmers would react by working their land more extensively, which would reduce the burden of waste management (slurry and dung).

Contrary to a pure free-market approach the aim of free-market ecological policies is to maintain as much agricultural land as possible in production, but less intensively worked.

Growth through the expansion of animal husbandry, independent of the land, aimed for often in the past, would hardly be possible. This would mean that the setting up of "agricultural factories" would be effectively hampered.

Until now ecologically-based agricultural production has not been considered adequately. Official agricultural policy has had the result that putting less profitable land out of production has become more worthwhile than cultivation without the use of chemicals over a wide area.

Even the agricultural industry itself has so far given inadequate consideration to the environmental problems which it has created.

Technical progress can increase social problems in agriculture as well. Large farming operations can deploy rationalised production methods, cultivating produce at favourable prices, but small units, less profitable and with fewer capital resources, fall by the wayside.

This is why at the back of the agricultural surplus problem there is the demand that farming should decouple from technical progress, which increases production. But this would mean that agriculture had a special status in the economy and would lead to fatal results.

Agriculture would voluntarily, or be forced, to do without participating in economic growth.

The starting-point of the free-market social strategy is to guarantee that agriculture does not decouple from technical progress but that structural changes linked to it are made socially tolerable.

The central point of this policy is state subsidies (direct income support) to compensate for losses of earnings from agricultural production.

This could be affected by financing farmers' pension, sickness and accident insurance; a programme of early retirement linked to a set-aside programme; special tax concessions for giving up farms; compensation for disadvantaged locations; guaranteeing set-aside premiums; financing re-training programmes for professional qualifications outside agriculture.

This strategy is naturally not new. In the past social measures have been introduced to make structural changes in agriculture socially tolerable. They will be called for more forcefully in the future, however.

In view of the unfavourable demographic developments in the agricultural sector, already obvious, it is foreseeable that the independent social security organisations, once so much favoured by the agricultural industry, are reaching the limits of what they can bear, while the call upon funds increases.

A warning

To this can be added the fact that disadvantaged regions can only maintain a functioning social infrastructure if more funds for direct payments to farmers are available.

A warning note should be sounded here. Social policies for the agriculture sector are not means of compensating farmers for management failings and shortcomings, or to disrupt market mechanisms.

They should not halt structural change but only mitigate its consequences for farmers.

Pure free-market strategies cannot alone solve the problems facing agriculture, for their results are neither ecologically nor socially tenable.

Equally free-market ecological and free-market social strategies cannot themselves solely be an answer.

In the end free-market, ecological and social strategies must be combined together. That is difficult, but simpler answers are unsuitable to solve complicated problems.

Unfortunately in agriculture there is a failure to assess its own position realistically. For a long time many farms have been in a hopeless situation without the farming family wanting to admit this.

This is just as regrettable as there is still no serious alternative to a family farming the land and there is no management or organisational form which can bring together food supply activities and ecological considerations better than an agricultural system based on farming families.

The agricultural industry has, until now, refused to accept the fact that agriculture represents a minority interest in our industrialised state, furthermore that it is a sector which has a bad reputation.

Even economic and socially justified matters of concern cannot be dealt with against the intentions of the majority. This is why there is no alternative for agriculture but to seek partnerships outside its own organisations.

One of these partners must be the moderate groups of the environmental protection movement, and not just be-

Continued on page 7

■ MONEY

Debate over power of banks rages on: limit to shareholdings suggested

If the height of a company's head office were any guide to its writ, the power and influence of the banks could hardly be disputed.

A glance at the Frankfurt skyline, with its steel, concrete and glass bank head offices, should speak for itself.

But it doesn't. Economic power and influence are not that easily quantified.

The underlying issue is nothing new. The power of the banks was discussed in the 1970s, with commissions being set up to examine the problem in academic detail.

To very little effect, it must be said. But that hasn't stopped the FDP leader, Count Lambsdorff, from raising the issue yet again.

A few weeks ago he even outlined a proposal he felt would solve the problem. It was that banks must not be allowed to hold a stake of more than 15 per cent in the share capital of other companies.

Fellow-Liberal Helmut Haussmann, Economic Affairs Minister in Chancellor Kohl's Bonn Cabinet, heartily approved.

As coincidence would have it, Lambsdorff's proposal more or less coincides with Haussmann's decision on the proposed merger of Daimler-Benz

Hannoversche Allgemeine

and Messerschmitt-Bölkow-Blohm, the aerospace group.

The largest single shareholder in Daimler-Benz is Germany's largest bank, Deutsche Bank.

So one might be excused for suspecting the move of being intended to brush up the FDP's reputation, tarnished by the proposed mega-merger, of being the party of market economics and the small and medium-sized businessman.

So is it all hot air, and the power of the banks a mere figment of the imagination?

It isn't that easy either. The banks are powerful and exercise their power, as any tradesman in need of credit knows only too well.

But three other issues are often mentioned as being debatable. They are:

- the voting rights of millions of small shareholders, which are exercised on their behalf at shareholders' meetings by the banks that manage their portfolios;
- the supervisory board directorships in other companies held by bankers;
- and, last not least, the banks' shareholdings in other companies.

The combination of these three factors is said to enable the banks to exercise undue influence on the German economy.

These allegations are levelled only at the leading private banks. The non-profit savings banks, the cooperative banks and the smaller private banks are usually disregarded.

Yet between them they account for a much larger share of the market than that held by the Big Three — Deutsche, Dresdner and Commerzbank.

Where shareholders' voting rights are concerned, one may fairly ask how else small shareholders are to get a fair hearing at shareholders' meetings.

The individual shareholder can specify which way the bank must vote on his behalf; the bank is then obliged to do so.

Bankers on the supervisory boards of large companies are not to be dismissed out of hand. Companies are keen to recruit directors with economic know-how, and bankers surely have it at their fingertips.

In 1965 legislation was passed limiting the number of (supervisory board) directorships an individual could hold to 10.

This move was known as the Lex Abs, being aimed at the boardroom power wielded by Deutsche Bank's Hermann Josef Abs.

Ten directorships is an enormous amount of extra work for someone who is presumably still in full-time employment.

For the bankers' sake — and that of the companies whose management they supervise — this number ought to be further reduced.

That leaves the overriding objection to the stake in industry held by the banks as shareholders. This stake has, contrary to general belief, declined since the 1970s.

Politicians have mixed feelings about banks holding substantial shares in other companies.

They are instinctively opposed to power being concentrated in so few hands, yet they welcome the banks' backing when capital is needed to bail out ailing companies such as AEG.

Large shareholdings held by German banks at least have one useful side-effect. They make life more difficult for corporate raiders.

In the United States or Great Britain, in contrast, obscure financiers can issue junk bonds and take over leading companies such as Nabisco or BAT, then set about stripping the assets.

After meeting their liabilities these corporate raiders still make a handsome profit. This — and the side-effect mentioned above — must be borne in mind when considering legislation to limit the banks' power. *Albrecht Scheuermann*

(Hannoversche Allgemeine, 11 August 1989)

Continued from page 6

cause without their approval less and less can be achieved. Fundamentally it can no longer be disputed that in conditions of surplus the compromise between agriculture and nature protection will be different from that in times of shortage. Farmers must see consumer associations as partners, associations which have much influence on the type and quality of food required. Attempts to belittle consumer behaviour are bound to fail.

On the contrary, wide strata of consumers must be convinced that it is worthwhile not only to give more attention to the ecological quality of food but also to pay more for it. There are clear signs that people will give more attention to the ecological quality. Most households have enough money to make it possible.

Agriculture does not require just policies; it also needs entrepreneurial flair. There are enough illusions already, which is why looking the facts in the face now is vital. *Hermann Birnkammer*

(Stuttgarter Zeitung, 15 August 1989)

Stockmarkets alive and well after crash

Less than two years ago the world's stock exchanges felt the end of the world was nigh. In October 1987 shares nosedived.

Yet the dire consequences that were forecast at the time have largely failed to materialise.

Unlike the crash of 1929, which triggered years of international economic depression, the crash of 1987 had little or no effect on the economy.

The Western industrialised countries are still in the throes of their longest post-war period of economic upswing.

In London and Tokyo pre-crash stock exchange record "highs" have long been surpassed. In New York the Dow-Jones index is about to do so.

At German stock exchanges the going has been slower. The Commerzbank index is slowly, with interruptions, heading back toward 2,000, which will still be a good 10 per cent less than its April 1986 all-time high.

German markets have been neglected by foreign investors, which is hardly surprising in view of the withholding tax debate. Slowly but surely, institutional investors are now rediscovering Germany.

It is, after all, the world's leading exporter. Exports are continuing to increase. Most stock exchange-quoted German companies are earning handsome profits.

Besides, the deutschemark seems likely to be revalued, so investments in Germany could net an exchange-rate windfall too.

Leading shares, such as those of the major chemical companies, are still undervalued. Japanese investors have taken a keen interest in them, pushing prices up in next to no time. By international standards German shares are inexpensive, with price-earnings ratios that are among the world's best.

Yet many concerned punters who invested before the last crash and lost heavily are wondering whether there will be any repeat of October 1987.

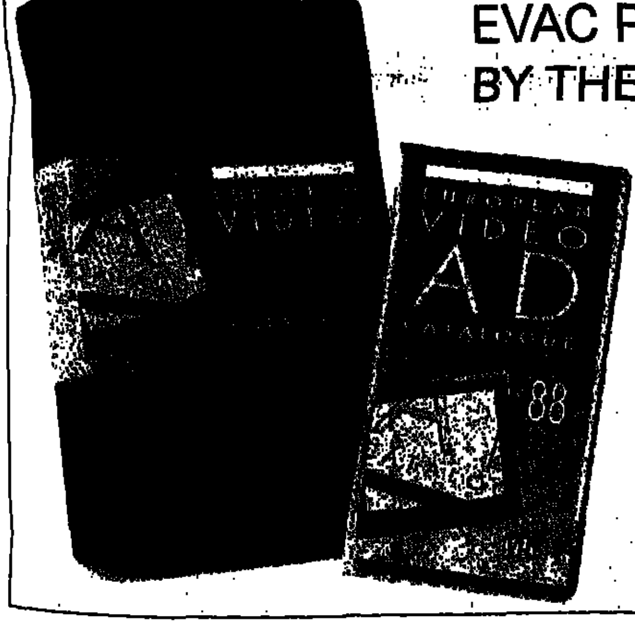
Despite sound economic data that ought to indicate a further upswing, a fresh downswing cannot be ruled out, due less to the German financial market than to links between the world's stock markets.

The chief cause for alarm is the burgeoning Japanese market. Many observers feel it could spearhead a further international decline.

One consolation is that speculating in securities is a popular sporting pastime in Japan, so a sudden sellout is unlikely.

German stock market investors are thus predominantly confident. Share prices seem likely to continue increasing, with periodic pauses for breath, in the weeks ahead. *Franz-Josef Nicola*

(Stuttgarter Nachrichten, 12 August 1989)



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■ SHIPBUILDING

Big Soviet order a bright light for an industry bedevilled on all sides

Two German shipyards are in the running to win the contracts to build 56 ships for the Soviet Union at a total cost of 4.5 billion marks. This is one bright spot in an industry in the doldrums. The government is handing out subsidies with ever less enthusiasm and many yards are diversifying into other fields such as power stations and industrial plant. In this article for *Deutsches Allgemeines Sonntagsblatt*, Hans Jürgen Nordhoff looks at the travails of the shipbuilding industry.

Shipyards Howaldtswerke-Deutsche Werft (HDW), Kiel, and Bremer Vulkan, Bremen, are in line to capture contracts to built 10 container ships and 46 multi-purpose freighters for the Soviet Union. The combined value of the orders would be 4.5 billion marks.

It is not yet known who will get the orders, but HDW chairman Klaus Neitzke says his yard's chances are "not too bad."

He is also in the happy position of being able to say that even if the yard doesn't get the contract, it has enough work to keep it going until 1992.

But all this cannot hide the fact that the industry in Germany is not in a healthy position. It is in a crisis brought about by worldwide dumping, the maze of subsidies, structural weaknesses in the industry and political short-sightedness.

This has meant that the Bonn government must still support the nation's shipbuilding industry. The government does not want to be dependent on deliveries from foreign yards and have to pay the price they demand.

Without taxpayers' money there would be even greater decline in the industry. Some shipyards have diversified into other products such as the construction of "Blockheizkraftwerke" (industrial and heating power stations for combined generation of power), plant to desulphurise industrial emissions or wind rotors to produce wind-power.

But even here these manufacturers can hardly get by without state subsidies and they are handed out hesitantly.

Compared with the DM35bn spent for the development of nuclear technology, state spending on alternative energy sources is negligible.

The Bonn government regards aid to shipbuilding as support to a dying industry so the latest call for help from shipbuilders has died away without an echo from Bonn.

The Bonn government and the Bundestag (Parliament) went off for the summer recess without approving aid.

Contracts worth billions are hanging in the balance because without government support they cannot go ahead.

With one voice, shipbuilders and the coastal *Länder* demanded DM250m in further subsidies up to the end of 1990. This amount is just silly, but even the FDP, which is usually strongly against subsidies, agreed.

Allocations to counter competition for 1989 have been used up. The Lindenau shipyard in Kiel, for instance, could build a chemical tanker, Bremer Vulkan four containerships and Flender in Lübeck one, if Bonn would shell out subsidies which are still below the limits set by the European Community.

These orders would keep these shipyards busy for the next few years. This path does not necessarily lead out of the red, since the full use of capacities does not mean profits.

Executives in Bremer Vulkan were delighted when losses for 1988 were as much as DM90m: the shipyard had been able to reduce the 1987 loss by a half.

HDW showed a loss of DM25m in shipbuilding in the last financial year: only through successful results in other divisions could HDW show a profit overall of DM14m.

To get out of the vicious circle of costly research, expensive contiguous planning, still poorer business and the rapid reduction in jobs IG Metall, the metalworkers' trades union, proposed in May 1987 a "development corporation" for the shipyards.

It was suggested that all know-how for the future should be collected under one roof. The Association for Shipbuilding and Ocean Technology expressed interest, but kept its distance.

So every yard is muddling along on its own. Hamburg's last major shipyard, Blohm & Voss, which has not built a merchant vessel since 1980, developed the "Blockheizkraftwerke" and desulphurising plant for industrial emissions and equipment for incinerating unharmful materials.

The working group "Alternative Fertigung," which would like to get out of the arms contracts business, regards there are further opportunities for profitable activity in obtaining raw materials from waste, refuse and incineration of sludge, and rational energy use.

HDW is producing wall and ceiling systems, as fitted into the interior of ships — but now for use in hotels and apartment houses; and driving shields for subway construction.

Bremer Vulkan is building railway bridges as well as gateways for use in anti-flooding systems, converting the



tracking on railway wagons, waste incineration plant and plant for desulphurising industrial emissions.

Workers there, members of the IG Metall union, are involved in the production of air-conditioning and water purification plant, equipment for recyling waste and waste management, and filtering plant.

Lindenau also produces water purification plant and wind-energy propulsion units for ships.

J.J.Sietas, Hamburg-Neuenfelde, produces double-glaze windows and refrigerated containers for foodstuffs based on nitrogen and carbon dioxide. The Thyssen-Nordseewerke shipyards in Emden produce de-burring machines for Volkswagen.

The Husum Shipyard has built more than 20 wind-power plants, three of which have been located beside the solar energy area on the island of Pellworm, just off the coastline in the North Sea. They are linked to this.

The Husum shipyard is building a 750-watt rotor, the largest the yard has ever built. But this cannot keep the wolves from the door.

In Hamburg, Bremen and Kiel employees have made several suggestions about alternatives but managements are not enthusiastic. Quite a few firms perfer to press ahead in the market they know.

Meyer, Papenburg/Ems, is successfully building ferries and gas tankers — at the beginning of June the first of a series of six chemical tankers for the Soviet Union was launched.

J.J. Sietas and Lloyd Werft, Bremerhaven, have full orderbooks. The Lloyd shipyard has specialised in conversions. Its most spectacular customer was Cunard's "Queen Elizabeth II."

But there is scarcely a shipbuilding company that can get ahead under its own steam. The Nobiskrug Shipyard in Rendsburg went bankrupt despite developing an award-winning catamaran for skimming oil-spills. The yard was subsequently swallowed up by HDW.

The Lühring shipyard in Brake won considerable praise for a tanker with hinged sides for sucking up oil at sea — one was sold to Mexico — but nevertheless the company had to go into bankruptcy.

The Association for Shipbuilding and Ocean Technology has praised the high standards of West Germany's industry in seabed boring and mining, including unmanned, submersible working equipment and simulators.

But because there is a shortage of state cash worldwide no great breakthough has been achieved in this sector.

Franz Froschmaier, Schleswig-Holstein's Economic Affairs Minister, bemoans that so little attention is paid to maritime technology. Space swallows up enormous sums, he said, but there is not a mark for ocean technology.

It is not surprising then that shipyards have looked for their salvation in arms manufacturing. HDW, Thyssen subsidiary Blohm & Voss and Thyssen Nordseewerke, have come to an agreement for the construction of warships. Thyssen-Nordseewerke and HDW work together below the waterline: Blohm & Voss and HDW above the waterline. They aim to build frigates, corvettes and cruisers.

This loose association of shipyards also includes Siemens, although this is not mentioned.

Competitor AEG, until now a Bremer Vulkan sub-contractor, has stayed out of this loose association of companies. Both look to Daimler-Benz, AEG because the company is a Daimler-Benz subsidiary, and Bremer Vulkan because earlier this year Daimler-Benz purchased a package of the shipyard's shares via a bank belonging to *Land* Bremen.

It is unknown whether from this co-operation a major shipyard will emerge, or whether it was just a matter of securing the few contracts from which good money can be earned with arms.

There are about 30,000 in the coastal *Länder* employed in the shipbuilding industry, and probably just as many in auxiliary supply companies. Arms systems cannot save these jobs for ever. There is a search on for alternatives of any kind.

Hans Jürgen Nordhoff

(Deutsches Allgemeines Sonntagsblatt, Hamburg, 11 August 1989)

Eight frigates to be built for Australia

Hamburg shipyards Blohm & Voss have won a contract which involves them in the design and building of eight frigates for the Australian government. There are options to build another two.

The contract is worth about five billion marks, the largest defence order ever placed by Canberra. Blohm & Voss's share will be about 250 million marks.

About 60 per cent of the contract will be fulfilled by Blohm & Voss's Australian partner company, Amecon (Australian Marine Engineering Consolidated) consortium at its Williamstown yards, Melbourne. The New Zealand government is considering ordering two frigates as well.

A Blohm & Voss spokeswoman in Hamburg said that a decision had not yet been reached about supplies of parts for the frigates, but the company, which is a subsidiary of Thyssen, might in addition get a contract to make the stabilisers.

The frigates would be the Meko-200 type frigate, which has been developed by Blohm & Voss and which has been an international success.

The reason for this is primarily that it is built to a "container-like" design so that technical innovations can be fitted into the frigates quickly and easily.

So far 22 frigates of this type have been sold abroad. Over the past few years Blohm & Voss has concentrated on the construction of specialised vessels, particularly warships.

For this reason the shipyard has available in Hamburg an extremely large department of engineers. They have enough work to keep them busy into the next century.

It is believed in Hamburg shipping circles that Blohm & Voss had to promise the Australian government that, through a direct participation in the frigates project, the Hamburg shipyard would get involved in modernising the Australian shipbuilding industry.

The company spokeswoman confirmed that the agreement to have the greater part of the frigates built in Australia was decisive for Blohm & Voss being *awarded* the contract rather than the *competing* Dutch De Schelde shipyards.

Blohm & Voss emphasised that the company regarded this Australian involvement as the basis for the joint construction of merchant ships and, eventually, oil drilling and extraction platforms at sea for Australia and the neighbouring countries in the South Pacific.

It is reported that the Dutch Hollands Signaalapparaten BV, a Philips subsidiary, has been awarded the contract to supply the electronics for the frigates. This order is valued at Df200m, but the value could be higher, a spokesman for the Dutch company said, because negotiations were still under way with Amecon.

With the possibility of this contract being awarded to the German consortium an agreement was made between the West German Trades Union Confederation and its equivalent in Australia, the Australian Council of Trades Unions, at the beginning of this year, according to which West German shipyard workers, suppliers and engineers employed on this project could get a work permit in Australia without any red-tape.

In return West German companies will train Australian skilled workers in German factories and shipyards.

(Stuttgarter Zeitung, 15 August 1989)

■ TRANSPORT

Booming motor industry waits for the trough

The German car industry is riding the tide of an unprecedented boom. Production and sales have set new records for over five years. Works are running extra shifts.

Yet there are signs of nerves in the boardrooms, with strategies being devised for the lean years — once the boom is over.

"We are heading along a sine curve," says a spokesman for Ford of Cologne. The next trough is said to be just around the corner, especially as cars in the Federal Republic of Germany are growing steadily newer.

With more and more new cars not needing to be replaced, Ulrich Jürgens of the Berlin Economics Centre expects surplus capacity of up to 30 per cent by the mid-1990s.

What is more, the Japanese are launching a European offensive, aimed at circumventing political barriers by manufacturing cars in European Community countries and gaining a higher share of European markets that are of crucial importance to the German industry.

Volkswagen is busy streamlining its operations to meet the Japanese challenge in the European internal market.

Ballast is being jettisoned drastically to make Volkswagen "more streamlined," says chief executive officer Carl H. Hahn. VW have axed 6,000 jobs this year. The smallest Volkswagen, the Polo, is to be made in Spain, where production costs are lower.

Radical savings are also planned on the cost of materials.

More components are to be bought from suppliers and the price savings are to be passed on to the car-buyer. "More car — a better-equipped car — for the same price" is Volkswagen's motto.

Ford and Opel have much the same in mind. "We see Volkswagen's move as a response to what we have long practised," says a spokesman for Opel.

Since last April, for instance, all Opels sold in the Federal Republic of Germany have been supplied with a catalytic converter as a standard feature.

But Ford can claim to have set the trend. Daniel Goeudevert, now with Volkswagen but then Ford's managing director, embarked on a sales campaign at the end of last year in which the

Continued on page 11

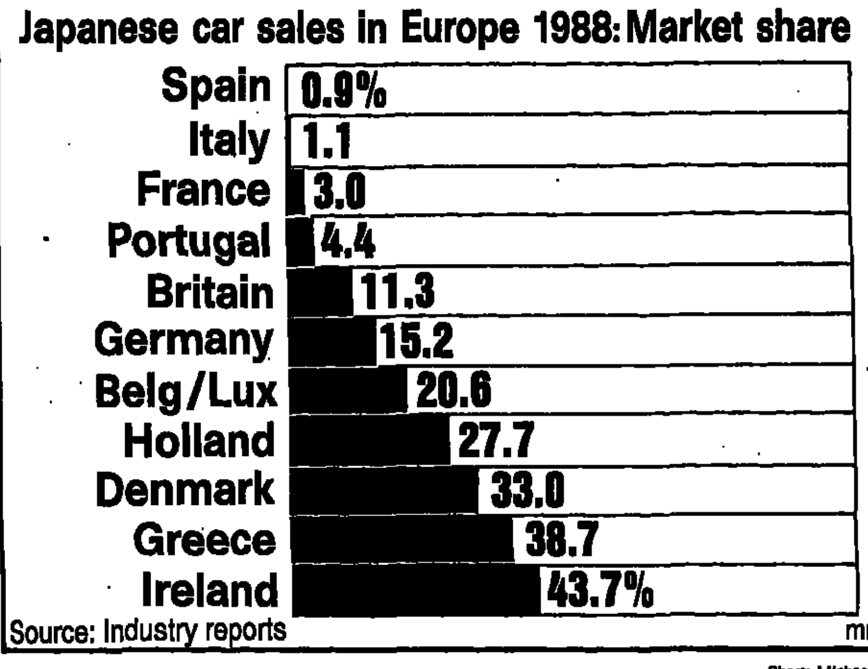


Chart: Michaelis

Porsche chief looks to the car of the next century

Ferry Porsche, head of the Stuttgart sports car firm, has outlined his view of the role of the automobile in the year 2000.

Professor Porsche, who will be 80 in a few weeks' time, is the son of the legendary designer Ferdinand (the VW Beetle was his brainchild) Porsche.

He feels the car of the future might well be powered by an engine mounted beneath the chassis and by a turbine.

These aren't just science fiction ideas from the think tanks of high tech; they are based on his decades of experience as a designer, and a start has already been made. "What I have in mind," Ferry Porsche says, "is the car with an engine mounted beneath its chassis that we developed for Volkswagen. It came very close to the ideal." He feels that the engine of the future, assuming it grows even smaller, must be rehoused where it takes up least of the passenger compartment. In the late 1960s Volkswagen, he says, missed the opportunity of replacing the Beetle by a range with a distinctive and unmistakable line of its own. After the unexpected death of Volkswagen's managing director Heinz Nordhoff in April 1968 the project in which Porsche had invested so much research and development was shelved.

Nearly 80 and still in top gear. Professor Ferry Porsche at the wheel of a 944 S test vehicle. (Photo: dpa)

The car ran "perfectly," Porsche recalls. Prototypes with engines mounted beneath the chassis were successfully test-driven in Africa.

"Everything had reached a very advanced stage and millions had been invested," he writes in his memoirs, written with the assistance of Günther Molter.

At the age of 79 he still has the last word on company policy from his office at the Porsche works in Zuffenhausen, Stuttgart.

He laid the firm's foundation stone by making the first Porsche sports car. New models are still not launched until he has given the go-ahead.

Porsche, as a sports car manufacturer and development centre for carmakers from all over the world, is Ferry Porsche's handiwork. The company has a payroll of 8,000.

It has been an *Aktiengesellschaft*, or public limited company, since 1972. But the Porsche and Piech families hold the voting shares.

The views of the grand old man of automotive design are based on personal experience as a designer of transmissions, engines and chassis that sent Porsches first past the chequered flag on nearly all the world's racetracks.

His ideas and warnings, aimed at designers, motorists and politicians, will trigger discussion. He feels compacts will predominate — as a compromise due to increasing shortage of space on the roads.

As nine out of 10 cars were used by no more than two passengers, the trend would be toward two-seaters, possibly with two emergency seats in the back.

Porsche foresees recycling trouble in connection with new materials used in vehicle construction, such as plastic bodywork. "Plastic," he says, "can't be eliminated; it doesn't rot."

He is convinced neither the diesel nor the conventional combustion engine has reached the end of its development road. The air-cooled engine "comes closer to the solution of the future" than the water-cooled engine.

As new materials are developed he feels sure there will be a possibility of using the turbine as a genuine alternative to the conventional piston engine.

Werner Scheib/vwd

(Nürnberger Nachrichten, 15 August 1989)

Hovertrain to ferry airport passengers

Rhine-Main Airport, Frankfurt, will be the first in the world to run a hovertrain passenger shuttle service. A contract has been signed with AEG Westinghouse.

The shuttle will run between the existing terminal and the East Terminal, which is due to be taken into service in 1994.

During peak periods twin carriage hovertrains will glide from terminal to terminal at intervals of as little as 90 seconds.

They will be fully automatic and travel at up to 60kph (38mph).

International transit passengers will be carried separately from domestic passengers, who from 1993 will include all passengers within the European Community.

Frankfurt is the busiest Continental airport, particularly where changing flights is concerned. Passenger facilities are having to be extended at such a rate that "people movers" are felt to be indispensable.

The hovertrain will cost DM160m, not including the cost of building its three stations. En route it will, for one, run right through an office building.

The manufacturer guarantees over 99.5-per-cent reliability.

In a second stage of construction hovertrain services will be laid on to link up with the airport railway station, where Bundesbahn inter-city and suburban electric trains stop, and the bus station, the conference centre and the airport hotel.

Frankfurt Airport, as the "showcase" of an export nation, is said by the board chairman of Frankfurter Flughafen AG, Horstmar Stauber, to have confidence in the German-designed hovertrain technology.

It decided in its favour in view of the system's innovative technology and environment-friendliness and hoped its decision would give the hovertrain a fillip.

AEG helped to develop the luggage conveyor belts in the new Central Terminal, as it then was, in the early 1970s.

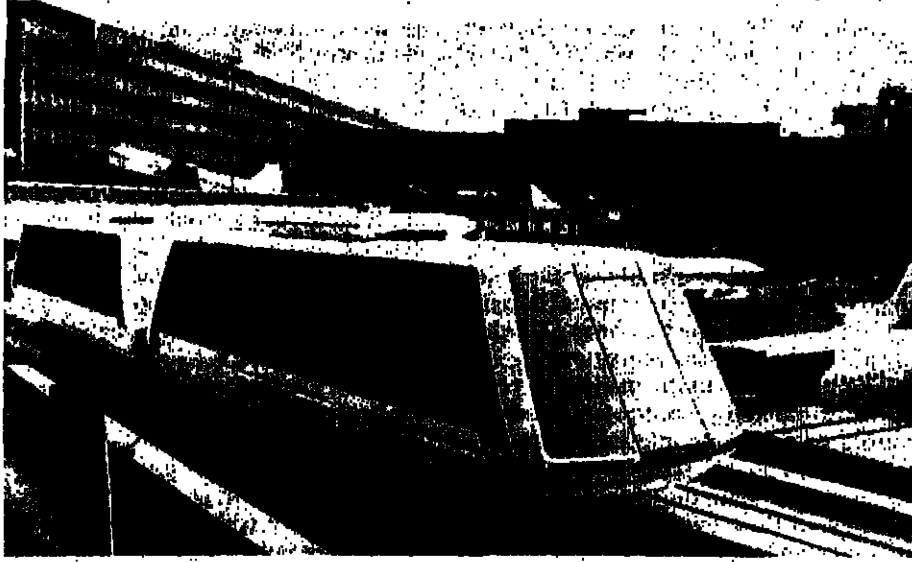
AEG and its US subsidiary, Westinghouse, were the world's leading manufacturer of airport passenger transfer systems, said AEG's Peter Stehle.

But the systems in use at Miami, Atlanta or Seattle airports were based on conventional technology.

Following hovertrain trials in Berlin, the Frankfurt contract was a further significant step forward for the new technology.

Hovertrains could also be used as feeders to local authority railway stations or link trade fair grounds and car parks, Herr Stehle said.

(Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung für Deutschland, 15 August 1989)



Dummy run. Hovertrain model at Frankfurt airport. (Photo: dpa)

■ THE CINEMA

The lights go dim at the last of the Dorfkinos

Otto Jansen has for some time not been able to earn a living from the cinema he owns in the small village of Berrenrath, just outside Cologne.

His cinema is one of the few remaining, unchanged, provincial cinemas dating from the 1950s.

The houses along the Berrenrath high street all look alike. In the centre of the village the large building with its rough-plastered facade, flowers in the window boxes and the curtains drawn in the upper floor windows does not stand out particularly — the building dates from the late 1950s.

But there are a few details which separate out this building from the others; for instance the showcase near the doorway. This does not include the usual notices about the local gymnastics club, but film stills, advertising the current film programme. This building houses one of the few remaining village cinemas.

Provincial cinemas are now as rare as households without television. But the Berrenrath cinema, affectionately known as the "Berli," is one of the few picture houses in the provinces which remain.

With its outdated yellow neon lighting the cinema advertises the evening's big screen entertainment, the latest film starring Otto, a comedian from North Germany, *Der Außerfriesche.*

In 1958 the people in Berrenrath had to leave their old houses in a coal-mining area because of opencast mining. They were settled in a new place with the same name, and they valued their village cinema as "welcome entertainment."

The cinema opened on 10 January in 1958, competing with ten other cinemas in the district. The "Berli" was very modern for the times, equipped with the latest projection apparatus. It survived all its competitors.

That was the time when television sets remained unsold on dealers' shelves. Those who loved the world of the moving picture went to the comfortable (most of them) seats in the cinema. For these people the opening of the new cinema was of particular importance.

Dr Otto Maigler, then director of the opencast mine, for which the people of Berrenrath had had to move to their new village, made a speech at the opening in front of the screen, from which the images of stars such as Zarah Leander, Willi Birgel and Hans Moser were later to flicker.

Such good times are now a thing of the past. But the "Berli" was saved from the fate of becoming a furniture warehouse or a discotheque, the fate of so many village cinemas. But for a long time now it has not been a going concern.

The large auditorium, where once night after night people licked icecreams waiting expectantly for the lights to go down and the programme to begin, is now empty during the week. This has been the situation for years now.

The projectors in the projection room are only cranked up at the weekends if a couple of young people, not from Berrenrath, want to spend a couple of pleasant hours in the cinema, chewing gum which they eventually stick under the seats, and who are not bothered that the films they see have already finished their run in nearby Cologne. But the cinema's swansong is being sung. It will have to go the way of all flesh.

Close by smart business people have laid the foundations for what will be an ultra-modern cinema centre, a palace constructed from glass and steel, which can cope with three thousand cinema fans at any one time in 14 separate cinemas.

Then the rubber plant in the foyer, representing the flora of the 1950s, will have had its day, and the bars of chocolate will no longer be on offer in the counter by the ticket desk to sweeten an evening in the cinema.

Dust is already gathering over the packets of paper handkerchiefs which were indispensible in the old days when a melodrama was showing.

The picturesque lamps, candelabra, shaped like petals, which hang on the walls, will presumably be extinguished for ever, and who knows what will happen to the spartan wooden seats, which still have something of the charm of the Ecomomic Miracle era?

The carpet, whose pattern is in the style of the 1950s, represents the great days of the cinema.

Local politicians are already talking of "protection of a historical monument," when the discussion comes round to the "Berli," and they do not mean just the old-fashioned interior but the exterior of the building.

Apart from in the large cities, however, there is almost no suggestion of supporting the cinema world.

The Berrenrath local government has it in writing that its attempt to open the "Berli" once a week to show a sophisticated film to help the cultural life of the village along, even with a subsidy, would end up in the red.

"Berli" owner Otto Jansen is 68 and now in retirement. For the past 30 years



he has loved dearly his cinema and has never been put off by a flop.

Although he knew that the cinema would never again provide him with a living, he had always considered that his theatre was such that eventually it could be used to put on a *Heimet* film of 1950s in a cinema in keeping with the film's style.

Otto Jansen lives over the cinema. If he had had to buy his daily bread with the profits from the tickets he sold for his cinema it would indeed only have been bread he could have purchased.

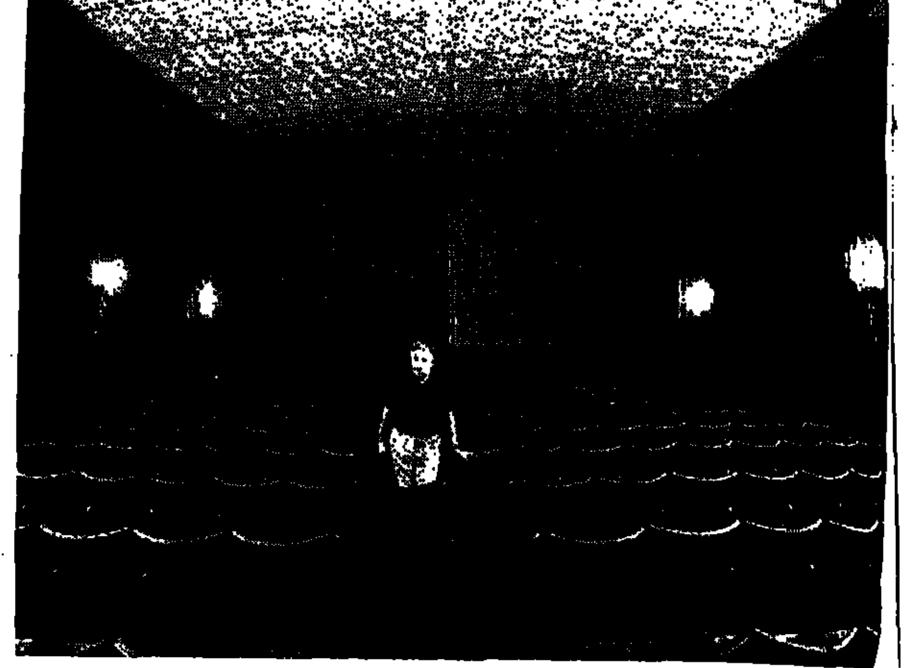
But despite everything he is the only cinema owner in the Berrenrath district who has been able to keep his head above water. He was only able to do this because during the day he worked in a chemicals company, which provided him with an assured livelihood.

The earnings from the cinema covered operating costs.

He sees the future grimly since building began on the nearby cinema centre. He now fears that at last the end has come.

It will be saying goodbye to a great passion, which will be very painful for Otto Jansen indeed.

He said: "Anyone who has smelled celluloid all his life, cannot easily give it up." His cinema was more of a hobby for him.



Otto Jansen amid the ghosts of the 50s.

(Photo: D. Klein)

The market ensures that establishments such as the "Berli" can only eke out an existance as a hobbyhorse. The cinema industry is in such a strained condition at present that even the large cinema chains are not doing very good business.

Otto Jansen was sitting in the projection room. He slowly turned on the lighting in the auditorium. The 200 seats suddenly emerged from the darkness. The curtain slowly moved to the side, showing the large screen.

Otto Jansen looked through the peephole in the projection room and thought about the past. He said: "They were good times, when I could look down from here into the auditorium, full of people."

On the two days a week he does show films he is not very keen to look down into the auditorium now, and that is understandable.

He said that the ten to twenty people who come to the cinema are lost in it and "I can do without looking in."

In the 1950s and 1960s the elderly people in Berrenrath came to his cinema "to see schmaltzy films which we could not show now."

In winter they brought a cushion and rug with them — the seats were not upholstered.

Otto Jansen stoked up the cinema oven so that it was as hot as it could be, but the auditorium was never properly warm.

Nevertheless the cinema had a faithful following, people who came to escape from the routine of daily life.

Otto Jansen recalled a literally black Sunday in his cinema, when the projector, for the afternoon performance, would not play the game.

The picture on the screen got blacker and blacker and then the sound joined forces with the projector and faded away.

Jansen did not want to write off the performance, so went off to Cologne with the loud-speakers in his car to get replacements from the company which had supplied the equipment.

Two hours later he arrived back at Berrenrath with new loud-speakers and the showing continued. The audience patiently waited for his return and feasted themselves on icecream.

Few of the few audience members have ever realised that they are enjoying a film, projected on equipment that is worth putting in a museum.

The solid projectors in the projection room, named 40 years ago as "Ernemann VIII" by the manufacturers Zeis, were "naturally, the best of the best in their day," as Otto Jansen put it.

Long iron pipes loom from the equipment under the ceiling and disappear into a smoke outlet.

The light, which projected the larger-than-life actors on the screen, was generated in the "Berli" by the burning of bricketts inside the apparatus.

In other cinemas everything was automatic. At the "Berli" Jansen had to roll back the reels of film by hand after each performance, before he returned them to the distributing company.

Jansen is proud of the projection quality of the films he showed. His pride is such that would put to shame the cinema centre, where many films will be screened in various cinemas all under one roof.

Jansen himself was the projectionist. He controlled the focussing and the sound. He also took care that the picture was centred on the screen properly.

He said: "Every film copy is different and the picture must be clean."

He was not only fastidious about the projection of the films, he made sure that everything was right and proper in every way.

Young people, who put on an adult voice so as to get into a film for which they were under age, did not get past Otto Jansen.

He said: "Of course, I checked their identity cards and did not let children in."

Cult films such as the American *Rocky Horror Picture Show* were taboo for him, a film in which the audience imitates the action on the screen and, according to the film, scatters rice over the seats.

"I don't go along with films of that sort," he said. He only screened normal films pointing out, however, that he showed the best the distributing company had on offer.

The distributing companies no longer have much time for Otto Jansen, the man who put on village cinema. This is why he now only orders new films for his old cinema by telephone.

He said that formerly the Düsseldorf distributing company staff used to talk to him using the familiar "du," and he has discussed business with them in their offices over a cup of coffee.

Blinking through his glasses Jansen proudly said that he still had the rights for first showing of new films in Hürth.

The last round has begun in the battle for the "Berli's" survival. Defiantly he

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■ BOOKTRADE ELECTS NEW HEAD

Plan to meet the challenge of post-1992 Europe

For the first time, a woman has been chosen to head the publishers' and booksellers' organisation, *Börsenverein.* Dorothee Hess-Maier who, with her cousin, heads Otto Maier Verlag, a large publishing house, takes over at a time when the signs are that the trade faces stormy days. Many small booksellers are worried about survival and no one knows what effects the single European market will have after 1992. Will it be possible to maintain both VAT on books at seven per cent and resale price maintenance (fair-trade agreements)? The argument for the latter is that it allows popular books to subsidise more serious writing. Konrad Teckentrup wrote this story for *Die Welt.*

Dorothee Hess-Maier, 53, chairwoman-elect of the *Börsenvereins des Deutschen Buchhandlung,* the booksellers and publishers association, is a shareholder and member of the executive board of the Otto Maier publishing house in Ravensburg, a family business.

In conjunction with her colleagues in the *Börsenverein* she intends to restructure the association.

The booktrade is facing a difficult future. It has structural problems. Members are expressing their uneasiness about the association's services.

Small booksellers are fighting for survival. They regard themselves as being threatened by the large bookselling companies and by the attempts by book wholesalers to reduce discounts.

The book trade looks upon 1992 as a warning sign. No-one knows what will happen when the single European market is in place.

Should the EC in fact do away with resale price maintenance and the seven per cent VAT charged on books, then the variety of West Germany's publishing would be reduced.

These are the problems which Dorothee Hess-Maier must address when she takes office. She is the daughter of a publisher but she did not enter publishing as a career directly. After passing the *Abitur,* the university entrance examination, she studied English and the applied arts in America.

When she returned to the Federal Republic she completed a training course in an advertising agency and the Institute for Pictorial Journalism in Munich.

At the same time she attended lectures on the history of art at Munich University.

She trained in bookselling before joining the distribution and advertising department of the family publishing house.

Other responsibilities were quickly placed in her lap. She changed over from marketing to the readers department. Later she took over the management of the publishing house which she held until 1978, when she was joined by Claus Runge.

Her cousin, Otto J. Maier, has a place with her on the executive board of the family firm. He is responsible for managerial and financial matters in the house.

Frau Hess-Maier is responsible for the publishing programme, personnel, public relations and general matters.

The Otto Maier publishing house depends on the creativity and innovative talents of its employees and its authors.

The pleasant surroundings in Ravensburg have a considerable attraction for new staff. Just how far this landscape moulds people can be discovered by reading the works of Martin Walser and Hermann Hesse from their "Lake Constance Period."

Although the publishing house is "in the provinces" this is of no importance.

The company puts great store on trust and the delegation of responsibility. It is accepted, however, that people make mistakes. The five business principles governing the company have proven themselves as a corrective.

The regulations for internal cooperation and staff qualifications, the philosophy behind the publishing programme, relations with the book trade and the aims of the company, are summarised in 21 sentences.

The philosophy behind the publishing programme is outlined in the first three sentences.

"We offer ideas which provide entertainment, excitement, amusement, pleasure and leisure-time enjoyment. Our ideas are suitable for the family and seek to guide the mind and the emotions. This excludes the glorification of violence."

Frau Hess-Maier's great-grandfather settled in Ravensburg almost by accident. His son, Otto Robert Maier, was at first a bookseller and began publishing in 1883.

She says he maintained the countryside around Lake Constance was tiresome for business but good for what he wanted from life.

He travelled a great deal in Austria and Switzerland, where he had been trained.

The house's first title clearly showed Austrian and Swiss influences. Both countries are still important markets for it.

Generations grew up and are growing up with games and books from Ravensburg. They are designed for entertainment and play a role in bringing people together.

The most important are: "Fang den Hut," in the catalogue since 1927, "Memory" (1959), "Malfefiz" (1960), "Hase and Igel" (1979" and "Scotland Yard" (1983).

The first Ravensburg Puzzles appeared in 1964 and have been sold successfully outside the Federal Republic, like the games.

The Ravensburg booklist, hardback and paperback, is directed at children and young people.

The range extends from picture books to non-fiction, from books about hobbies to children's books. The house also publishes books on art and design.

The Otto Maier publishing house has become international in the meantime. The company exports to more than 20 countries. The group includes more than ten subsidiaries and firms in which the group has a shareholding, including a film and tv production company.

Last year the company had a turnover of DM247m with profits of DM13.2m. It employs 1,100.

Dorothee Hess-Maier did not intend to run for the chairmanship of the *Börsenverein.* The proposal came from her board colleagues who gently pressed her into it. But Frau Hess-Maier is not influenced much by "gentle persuasion."

She felt that she should take on the office and that her family and the publishing house should give her their support. Her husband is a lawyer in Ravensburg and her son takes the *Abitur* in 1990.

Dorothee Hess-Maier could imagine that colleagues with more experience in the *Börsenverein* could have taken on the chairmanship, but having served on the association's executive board for three years she feels encouraged. She is convinced that she can have some effect.

Until she was elected chairman she had not been very active in the *Börsenverein.*

As a publisher she has operated in her company in a way which is not usual in the business. She asks different questions and makes different suggestions to what is usual.

Her own experience has given her an understanding for the critical attitudes of many members of the *Börsenverein.*

Her term of office as chairwoman lasts three years and will take up about 30 per cent of her time.

She chairs a board "which is aware of its responsibility for giving the association leadership, but this board itself needs leadership. I intend to give it that.

"But I do no want to lay down visionary aims for the association's next few years. I want to discuss with the board the factual questions which are waiting for consideration. "To cope with these tasks the involvement of the members must be secured, particularly as some members have different needs to those many association members imagine.



From a publishing family . . . Dorothee Hess-Maier. (Photo: Thomas Weiss)

"You have to be prepared to listen and get to know what is happening outside, even if we know, for example, that the smaller retail booksellers overestimate the association's room for manoeuvre."

She does not regard herself as the "thinker for the association's future." She believes that the association has its own "thinkers about the future" and she intends to utilise them but not to be dependent on them.

She said: "The board and the general meeting of representatives are needed to keep the thinkers to the point and to push ahead with decisions."

Summing up her working methods she said: "I'm used to dealing with matters pragmatically and to handle them in such a way that that they can be dealt with.

"I'm not the type who weighs up situations, who masters connections and has an instinct for things."

The most important matters she will address include re-structuring the association's management so that it is more in keeping with today's requirements.

This includes reducing the size of the committees; but this cannot and should not be decreed by the executive board.

She intends to streamline the association's administration according to modern management principles, which is for Dorothee Hess-Maier a question of cooperation and motivating staff.

"The people involved must be made participants and linked to decision-making."

She believes that the association can only be effective in the booktrade at large when it is efficiently organised internally.

The way things are handled, the association's organisation and its subsidiaries must be investigated, activities better coordinated and the resources available utilised jointly in future.

She also believes that improvements can be made to the communication between the district assocations and headquarters in Frankfurt.

"It is vital that retail booksellers, wholesalers and publishers work together in the association," she said.

She hopes for an harmonisation of differing interests and viewpoints, and she pointed out that the basic elements of the book trade, such as copyright, keeping resale price maintenance, maintaining and tax preference for books, can only be handled and brought to a satisfactory conclusion in Bonn and Brussels by working together.

Konrad H. Teckentrup

(Die Welt, Bonn, 10 August 1989)

Continued from page 9

Fiesta was to be sold at the old price but better equipped and with more advanced technology.

Ford and Opel are still ahead of Volkswagen in cost structure too. Both have cut costs substantially in recent years and are earning much higher profits.

Ford proudly claim to manufacture compacts on German assembly lines at a profit. Admittedly, the technology on which the cost-cutting Fiesta is based is from Mazda, in which Ford Inc. holds a 20-per-cent stake.

General Motors hold a stake in the Japanese car industry too: almost 42 per cent of Isuzu. But Opel have yet to collaborate with Isuzu in vehicle development.

As subsidiaries of the largest carmakers in the world, Ford and Opel are still ahead of Volkswagen in several respects.

Volkswagen has to invest heavily in sales and service networks in many countries, whereas Ford and Opel can concentrate on making and developing cars. Their parent companies are already represented all over the world.

Even up-market BMW and Daimler-Benz are casting anxious glances in Japan's direction. "We are taking the Japanese very seriously," says a spokesman for BMW.

Daimler-Benz takes a similar view, saying: "In principle all Japanese manufacturers are competitors."

They are said to be coming under growing crossfire from the Koreans at the lower end of the market and are limbering up to gain a larger share at the up-market end.

That can only mean an attack on German manufacturers of up-market models. The Nissan Infinity and the Toyota Lexus, just launched in the United States, are a foretaste of what can be expected.

"We must make even better cars and maintain our technological lead," Daimler-Benz say. The Mercedes manufacturer aims to hold its own in the service sector too.

"We are considering new approaches to customer service, such as breakdown services," says a spokesman.

It hopes to benefit from cooperation with the various members of the group, including AEG and Messerschmitt-Bölkow-Blohm, the aerospace group.

BMW do not plan to venture so far afield, but acquisitions are envisaged, especially in the electronics sector.

Chief executive Eberhard von Kuenheim: "The increasing quantity of electronics in cars makes it essential for us to develop key systems of our own." *Lutz Bode*

(Hamburger Abendblatt, 14 August 1989)

■ MEDICINE

Operation by torchlight in the shadow of Kilimanjaro



Phillipo's face is disfigured by his disease. Skin tumours line his cheeks and forehead and overlap his eyes, making him almost blind.

As he lies on the operating theatre table at a hospital on the outskirts of Arusha, the 37-year-old patient from southern Tanzania cannot see the floor.

Maybe that is just as well. Can he even imagine that it is so spattered with blood that it looks as though chickens have had their necks wrung and been bled there?

Professor Werner Widmaier leans over the patient's disfigured face in semi-darkness. There has just been a power blackout in Arusha, population 100,000, and even in the operating theatre of St Elizabeth's, the Roman Catholic hospital where he works.

Professor Widmaier, a 65-year-old retired surgeon from Stuttgart, still finds it hard to believe that in English his workplace is called a theatre.

Theatre or not, a nurse switches on a flashlight and points it at the patient's "elephant face." Professor Widmaier refers to it as an angio-neuroma; there are times when medical terminology is more merciful than the vernacular.

Philippo breathes heavily. The anaesthetist would gladly have given him a narcotic to spare him unnecessary pain. But the 50-bed hospital at the foot of Mount Kilimanjaro lacks the equipment needed to control the flow of gas.

So all the anaesthetist can do is administer tranquillisers and a local anaesthetic.

"Let's hope he isn't coked to the eyeballs," Professor Widmaier says, "as then the basic anaesthetic won't work."

He had imagined it all being entirely different, the surgeon says. Not that he had planned to retire and rest on his laurels.

He and Professors Eduard Schmid and Heinz Reichert spent nearly 40 years at the Marienhospital in Stuttgart, making it one of the largest European clinics specialising in plastic, facial, dental and reconstruction surgery.

As a practising Catholic he had hoped to work in a Third World country as a gesture of gratitude. But it became more than a gesture.

Professor Widmaier's new career is "a struggle against indescribable hardship." A journey to Tanzania became an expedition. A pensioner became a pioneer.

A team of six accepted an invitation from the Bishop of Arusha and flew to East Africa last December. They were Professor Widmaier, his wife Gretel, his 23-year-old son Michael, who is a trained nurse, two nurses and the anaesthetist, Ilse Hofmeister.



Professor Widmaier shows how it was.

(Photo: Andreas Weise/Focus)

Their reception was a far cry from what he had been expecting. Like many aid volunteers before him, Professor Widmaier learnt at first hand that co-operation with government agencies in developing countries can be fraught with difficulties.

Suspicions that what the rich countries in the northern hemisphere deign to send is not all good are deep-seated and can backfire on guilty and innocent alike.

The Stuttgart Six had brought with them in containers what they needed for their work: sterile thread, bandages, operating equipment, surgeon's clothing, disinfectant, ointment, penicillin, 800 disposable needles and 1,000 pairs of plastic gloves.

Professor Widmaier's colleagues, friends and acquaintances had collected and packed the six hundredweight of equipment, worth DM50,000, and shipped it from Stuttgart.

The Tanzanian customs, in a country keen to switch to a free market economy but still strictly socialist by the terms of its constitution, inspected the contents of the containers and smelt a rat.

Were the Germans planning what European doctors do in neighbouring Kenya, to operate only on the rich and for hard cash?

Professor Widmaier told and retold his tale, which was that St Elizabeth's Hospital had only one doctor, that the operating theatre had a single table and a lamp and that he would be working there absolutely free of charge.

After signing yet more paperwork to that effect he and his party were finally allowed, after protracted negotiations, to enter the country.

The operating theatre has run out of water. Professor Widmaier washes his hands in Sterillium, an alcohol-based disinfectant, and reaches for the scalpel.

The operation ends sooner than he had intended. Blood spurts like a gusher out of a wound near Phillipo's right eye. Professor Widmaier decides to leave the left eye until another time.

While he cauterises the patient's blood vessels, Phillipo's fellow-countrymen sing songs of joy in the corridor and in the ten-bed wards.

For many it is the first time in their lives they have slept in beds with sheets and mattresses. They take turns at trying it out, slipping into bed alongside their next of kin: father, mother, brother, sister.

It is quieter, markedly quieter, in the upper storey where malaria, tuberculosis and worm-ridden patients lie in bed, racked by fever. Professor Widmaier can't help them.

But he can help Phillipo, and if he were still chief surgeon at the Marienhospital in Stuttgart he would have uncovered the patient's left eye too.

In Germany he would have arranged for enough blood to be available for transfusion. In Africa he feels there is too great a risk of donor blood being HIV-infected.

He would probably not even have considered a blood transfusion if he had known what health experts had to say at the international Aids conference held in Montreal last June.

Aids was spreading like wildfire in Africa, the director of Zaire's national Aids control programme told fellow-doctors.

Immune deficiency had long ceased to be limited to risk groups. Eight out of 10 infected patients were neither homosexuals nor drug addicts.

Ten per cent of cases were due to blood transfusions. Tanzania, one of the world's poorest countries, is in no position — any more than Zaire is — to fight the trend by means of Western-style health education campaigns and blood tests.

In Arusha a metal bucket is virtually unobtainable. It would cost a nurse at the hospital a month's wages.

Besides, the Tanzanian health authorities would be preaching to deaf ears. The Masai would certainly not take kindly to being told what to do and what not to do.

At the foot of Mount Kilimanjaro they have fended for themselves, as nomad cattle breeders, for centuries. They live in huts made of branches and cow-pats and keep largely to a diet of milk with a dash of cow's urine.

"It's a kind of yoghurt that keeps for longer than milk," Professor Widmaier feels. He has seen for himself that the Masai wash their children in urine — "a first-rate disinfectant."

The Masai, who speak a language hardly anyone in Tanzania understands, mainly come to him to have burns treated. Nearly all of them are scarred by burns from the open fires they keep burning in their huts.

The burns may hurt, he says, but the Masai would never dream of putting the fire out.

He is back in Germany after operating on 124 patients in Arusha. He removed skin tumours and operated on countless hare-lips and split gums and jaws.

On the hospital's corridor, amid wooden buckets and washerwomen, he ran his surgery. He feels he has been able to show gratitude for having lived a full life. He may even have taught others to

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■ HEALTH

Iodised salt in campaign against goitre

Between six and eight million people in Germany have goitre, morbid enlargement of the thyroid gland.

About 80,000 operations a year are performed on men, women and even children victims — the statistics are an eye opener.

Goitre shows itself when a person can no longer fasten the top shirt-button. Victims become short of breath, have trouble swallowing and suffer from metabolic disorders.

Goitre is widespread in the Alps but occurs in the plains more often than assumed.

Professor Dieter Hötzel of Bonn University department of dietetics recently expressed surprise at the frequency of goitre in Göttingen and Lübeck, as shown by surveys of babies and schoolchildren in the respective areas.

Göttingen is south of Hanover, near the Harz hills. Lübeck is a Baltic seaport in an area that, both geographically and in outward appearance, is virtually the direct opposite of parts of Germany where goitre has traditionally been regarded as widespread.

It is the result of natural iodine deficiency in the soil, vegetation and food — animal and vegetable.

Iodine, an essential mineral, is so water-soluble that it has been washed out of loose soil since the Ice Age and swept down to the sea.

"Fresh-water fish eaten twice a week is nowhere near enough to meet man's iodine requirements," Professor Hötzel says.

"A healthy stroll by the seaside is equally inadequate; it results in a negligible extra intake of iodine via the respiratory organs."

Consumer advice centres and tourist boards should tell people in plain words what the position is.

Latest scientific surveys indicate that Germans today have an average daily intake of between 70 and 80 micrograms of iodine.

The German Dietetic Association in Frankfurt recommends a daily intake of between 180 and 260 micrograms from the age of 10 to keep the thyroid gland healthy.

The World Health Organisation recommends even higher levels, so the deficit would seem to be a good 100 micrograms a day. Children's daily requirements gradually increase, from age two to nine, from 80 to 140 micrograms.

Goitre can readily be avoided and, in its early stages, reversed in children if medically supervised iodine intake is adequate.

In neighbouring Austria and Switzerland this has been the practice for decades, and the occurrence of goitre there has declined drastically.

An extra intake of roughly 100 micrograms of iodine a day in Austria and Switzerland has virtually eliminated both iodine allergy and overfunctioning of the thyroid gland.

It can be administered in tablet form or in alternatives to salt for people on a low-salt diet. It is particularly useful to meet extra iodine requirements during puberty or pregnancy (and breast-feeding).

Why is iodine usually administered as an admixture to table salt? "Salt," Professor Hötzel says, "is an ideal mode of transport for iodine. Besides, it is consumed in fairly uniform quantities.

"Salt consumption is about 10 grams per person per day. From the medical viewpoint five grams per day are enough to stay healthy.

"The iodine admixture in iodised table salt is sufficient to ensure that five grams of salt a day include a sufficient daily ration of iodine."

It can only be sufficient, however, if food manufacturers, canteens and restaurants regularly use iodised salt.

Eighty per cent of the food we eat is manufactured industrially, and 18 million Germans eat one or all meals a day away from home.

It is probably not enough to sprinkle iodised salt on radishes to go with a sandwich or on meat and fresh vegetables.

At the end of June regulations issued by the Federal Youth, Family and Women's Affairs and Health Ministry on the use of iodised salt came into force.

Iodised salt, previously available only for domestic use, may now be used to manufacture foodstuffs and in canteens.

It remains to be seen whether politicians will succeed in convincing the public of the need for this belated health precaution sufficiently to ensure that food manufacturers and consumers make a point of insisting on iodised salt.

Millions of young people could be spared the inconvenience and ill-health of goitre, and the follow-up cost of thyroid gland treatment could be reduced substantially.

Professor Peter Pfannenstiel, a Wiesbaden specialist in nuclear medicine, has worked out the cost and says the saving could amount to roughly DM1bn a year.

Ingrid Zahrádpa

(General-Anzeiger, Bonn, 12 August 1989)

A poisonous housewarming from paint and varnish

When Nelly Gruber moved into a new apartment in the town centre of Konstanz, she painted it.

She soon wished she hadn't. The paint began to crack and emit a powerful smell. It was so pungent that it stung the eyes and made them water. A friend suffered nose-bleeding.

Just over a year ago, Frau Gruber began investigating. She left the apartment for a while and the symptoms disappeared. Then she returned and back they came. She grew increasingly worried that she might die of asphyxiation.

Ordinary doctors were at a loss for a diagnosis. It took a lung specialist to identify her complaint as persistent obstructive bronchitis due to formaldehyde and isocyanate inhalation.

Chemists took samples of air in her apartment. They were found to contain three times the Federal Health Agency's recommended level.

Six months after she moved into the apartment the isocyanate count was still three times the recommended long-term limit. She soon realised that it came from the coat of varnish she had given her floorboards before moving in.

An architect friend had advised her to use polyurethane-based DD varnish. Polyurethane-based varnish, she was shocked to learn, can emit highly reactive isocyanate.

She delved deeper into the subject and discovered that over 250 scientific articles about isocyanate complaints had been published since 1951. She decided something had to be done.

She set up a contact group for environmental toxin victims, realistically assuming that there must be many more sufferers.

Polyurethane-based varnish is used in bulk. Between 1981 and 1985, annual turnover increased from 23,000 to 32,000 tons. Manufacturers were enthusiastic about laboratory findings which indicated that a tough coating of varnish hardened within hours of being applied.

This international success story dates back to 1937 when research chemists at the Bayer works in Leverkusen developed the di-isocyanate polyaddition process to manufacture polyurethane.

Fifty years later polyurethane was one of the most widespread synthetics of its kind, with an annual consumption of about five million tons. It is used in insulating foam, in composition board, in glue, varnish, cable insulating material and upholstery.

Doctors are slowly beginning to realise how dangerous it is. In Bhopal, India, 24,000 kilograms of impure methyl isocyanate killed 2,000 and injured 20,000.

Specialists in industrial medicine have been aware since the 1950s of fatalities due to isocyanate. They also know that highly reactive isocyanate molecules can damage cell membranes.

"Mucous membranes in the respiratory tract are particularly endangered," says Professor Hans-Joachim Woitowitz of Giessen University medical ecology centre.

Paint and varnish manufacturers say polyurethane-based varnish does not contain di-isocyanate monomers. But consumer consultants have their doubts: doubts based on experience with similar substances.

"Very small isocyanate concentrations," says industrial medic Dr Franz Prügger, "can lead to slow and imperceptible damage to the respiratory system."

There are good reasons why very low ceilings have been specified for these substances. The council of expert advisers to the Federal government on environmental issues stresses that di-isocyanate may also be converted into diamine, which causes cancer.

It is a chemical time-bomb. Says Dr Hermann Fischer of Auro, who manufacture naturally-based paint and varnish: "Use multi-component varnish and you can be sure of having a chemical reaction on your floor."

There is no reason why you should. If your floor is made of wood, why coat it in plastic? Environmental biologists recommend oil or wax.

Gerd Pfitzenmaier

(Stuttgarter Nachrichten, 12 August 1989)

Continued from page 12

help themselves and been not just a helper but a development aid worker.

Joseph Mardai, a Tanzanian who supervises work at St Elizabeth's, has watched him at work, helped him and carried out the occasional operation himself.

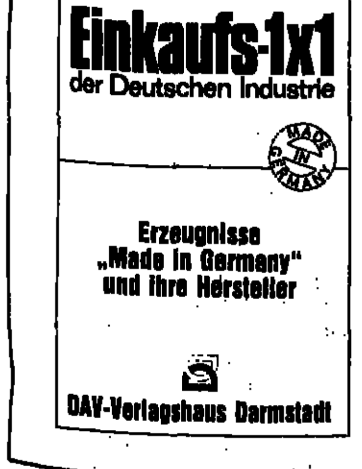
"He ought to learn more in Germany," Professor Widmaier says. But he won't be able to do so. Doctors are few and far between in Tanzania and he is in charge of both the Arusha hospital and 200 rural medical centres.

Professor Widmaier has decided to return to Arusha in December. His flight is already booked.

Axel Veiel

(Stuttgarter Zeitung, 8 August 1989)

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■ FRONTIERS

Practice of half-day prison visits slow to catch on

Under an experiment which began in 1984, inmates of a prison near Karlsruhe are allowed to spend entire afternoons — and sometimes even longer — with their relatives. Although the experiment is regarded as successful, few other prisons are following the example. Harald Preusker, director of Bruchsal prison, says the longer visits, which take place in more convivial surroundings than before, have helped develop a relationship between prison authorities and prisoners' relatives and a rare sense of community between prisoners and prison has emerged. One aim of the experiment is to improve prisoners' capacity to deal with people and to come to terms with problems. Rainer Stroad reports for *Mannheimer Morgen*.

Prison director Harald Preusker admits that under the old system, the atmosphere was not pleasant and it was impossible to conduct normal conversation.

Prisoners used to meet relatives in a badly lit room with a prison officer behind a glass window looking on. Pictures on the wall intended to cheer up the atmosphere did not help much.

Herr Preusker admitted it was not surprising that many visits were "painfully embarrassing."

Not all prisoners are allowed the longer visits. One said about the traditional system: "It isn't pleasant. You get ready for it, *thinking of things to* talk about. But you feel nervous and your mind is all over the place.

"Then you sit there and the time is past before you know it. Then you stand outside and think to yourself that you have forgotten to say this or that.

"You wonder what you did say. And you know that the next time the same thing will happen. You make a list of what you want to talk about, but that does not help much."

Penal institution regulations govern all that goes on in prison. One rule says that contacts with people outside the prison should be encouraged. But this rule goes on to lay down a minimum visiting time of an hour per month per prisoner.

All prisons allow prisoners more than one or two hours, but it is doubtful if there is any benefit for the prisoner for contacts with the outside world, assuming he has any, under such conditions.

The Bruchsal experiment for extended visits has proven its worth since it was introduced in May 1984.

Other countries have far-reaching regulations concerning prisoner contacts with the world beyond the prison walls, contacts which do not exclude sexual relations.

The Bruchsal experiment gained its premises by accident. After some building work had been done to the prison watch tower a building container was left standing in the prison yard.

This was converted into two visiting room units at a cost of DM5,000. The rooms were made more cheerful with two armchairs, fitted corner seating, a table, a separate toilet, a coffee percolator and other small items such as pictures for the walls and children's toys.

The grass in front of the units was tidied up and a sand play-pit for the children provided.

Preusker said: "The special aspect of this experiment is that the visits are conducted in quite a different atmosphere and that they are not supervised by guards. And of course the length of the visits."

The visits can last for half a day and *for a whole day*, on occasions, if the visitors have come from abroad.

The time taken for these visits is not taken into account in the four-hour a month visiting entitlement which prisoners have and which have been applied in Bruchsal for a long time.

But it's not so bad inside.

(Photo: Wolfram Glaser)

The expression "unsupervised" has a relative meaning in a prison. There is a double fence around the container at Bruchsal. Prison officers can see what is going on in the visiting rooms through a glass doorway which cannot be closed from the inside. But they seldom pry.

The usual security controls are applied with metal detectors and body checks. But there is no prison officer in the room to see and hear what goes on between the prisoner and his visitors.

"We wanted to give the prisoners the chance to talk intimately with their relatives in an atmosphere which makes conversation possible, an atmosphere which is not charged with anxiety and where there is no prison official," Preusker said.

In addition he and his staff, two lawyers, two psychologists and six social workers, try to make personal contact with the visitors.

Herr Preusker said: "It is encouraging for us when we see that wives take part in the penal plan conference. No-one else does that in the Federal Republic."

The advantages are obvious. If, for example, a prisoner refuses to take part in a training course in the prison workshops because he does not want to be unpopular with his fellow-prisoners for instance, his wife can talk him round.

Herr Preusker said: "The wife can achieve things which we cannot





achieve because we are regarded more as an enemy than as a friend."

The arrangement appears to have proven itself, because the deep embarrassment visitors have coming to the prison has been effectively diminished.

What is more, the contacts between the prison authorities and the prisoners' relatives are closer and, more importantly, more understanding.

Herr Preusker said that there had been an unexpected side result from the arrangement. "Prisoners have shown an extraordinary sense of responsibility about this facility."

Unlike what happens in the normal visiting rooms in Bruchsal where manners are rough, nothing is damaged in the special visiting units. There is a sense of community, solidarity, which is rare in a prison situation.

All prisoners having extended visits, for instance, are prepared, spontaneously, to pay five marks for toys and for a children's sandpit. Even prisoners without children pay.

About 60 of the 400 or so prisoners in Bruchsal have benefited from the new regulations. Prisoners who are regarded as dangerous or likely to try and escape are not allowed this facility.

This does not mean, of course, that the remaining 340 or so are suspected of being likely to try and escape: some of them have other privileges such as leave of absence, or they do not have any contacts outside prison. No-one, however, is fundamentally excluded from the regulations.

The idea behind the extended visiting period programme is to improve a prisoner's aptitude to deal with people and his problems. This includes efforts to induce a prisoner to take part in training, sport, discussion or therapy programmes.

Harald Preusker said: "Anything which improves a prisoner's chances in a particular area, improves his chances overall."

The new arrangements seem to have made considerable demands on the prison, but the prisoners themselves have confirmed how important the new visiting arrangements have been to their relationships.

One said: "During the extended visiting periods there is quite a different atmosphere. I've been able to show my affection. I can hold my wife in my arms and give her a kiss.

"We know that we have plenty of time and we can talk about things at length and not about such daft things as the weather. And when my daughter comes I can play with her."

Another prisoner said: "Contacts with the outside are what keep you going and the extended visit helps to keep contacts going."

During my visit to the prison neither the prison director nor a prison officer was present for my chats with prisoners. I had the feeling that they said what they thought and not what "the authorities" wanted to hear.

These developments would not have been possible if those directly involved had not gone along with the programme, according to the prisoners. They meant the prison officers.

Herr Preusker said: "Regulations do not work if they are not supported by the prison staff. You can forget everything if there is not full cooperation from the staff, if they do not realise that a little friendliness goes a long way."

Long, tough discussions were held with prison officers until they were convinced not only to *tolerate* the extended visit programme but to *accept it* totally.

The regulations are called "family extended visits" at Bruchsal. This instantly indicates the limitations of the programme, for the ideal arrangement, which Herr Preusker had in mind, had to be modified in the course of official discussions about it.

Originally the programme was to be open to all categories of visitors, "when it was considered that these contacts were good and important." This meant girlfriends, female companions or fiancées.

But compromises had to be made. Now only close relatives such as parents, grandparents, brothers and sisters, children and wives are allowed to take part in the extended visiting programme.

Opposition

Preusker said that this was a watering-down of the idea, but he did not want to undermine this development from the very outset and certainly not before the first phase had got off the ground.

There was not only political opposition to the idea but also from the public. A lot of effort has been *put into* convincing politicians and *public alike* of the benefits of this *programme*.

The reactions were *at first*: "Love cells," "Sex in prison" and "What next?" and expressions of the widely-held view that prison was society's revenge on criminals.

Preusker is now glad that he was able to introduce the new regulations five years ago. Prisoners are well aware of their value.

The question is: why is the Bruchsal experiment rare in the German penal system, despite the advantages which have emerged from it?

Two prisons in North Rhine-Westphalia have introduced extended visiting programmes, which it is hoped are the result of the experience gained at Bruchsal.

Preusker talks of "tradition and taboos" influencing his colleagues in other prisons, and their anxieties about the risks involved.

He said: "We are not paid to introduce risky innovations. This has been done at our own risk. We should have had difficulties if it had not worked."

But obviously after 1,500 extended visits between prisoners and their relatives it has been worthwhile. But Bruchsal is just one of 167 prisons.

Rainer Stroad

(Mannheimer Morgen, 10 August 1989)

■ HORIZONS

A funny thing happened on the way to the beer tent

American football is becoming more popular in Germany. The final of the European championship is being held in Hamburg next month. Here, Elmar Brümmer looks at an aspect of the game Europeans aren't too sure about.

Which came first, the chicken or the egg? In this case, the egg weighs 396 grams and is made out of leather. We had better forget about where the hen comes in.

Which did come first? American football or the cheerleaders? The Düsseldorf Pantherettes reply in unison: "We've been here as long as there's been football."

A look backwards, however, shows that at the beginning, the business of cheerleading was firmly in the hands of men. Their task was to turn individual cries of fans into a concerted battlecry.

Two pensioners at the Max Graser Stadium in Stuttgart stood with eyeballs goggling. They were used to the no-frills, no-give-and-take of the league soccer scene. Yet here were five women swinging their legs like they were in the Folies Bergeres. Only their red-and-black skirts were even shorter.

The Pantherettes are the German champions in their field. They are judged on figures, battlecries, vocal tone and appearance.

Karin says: "Naturally, we should be good looking," and she displays a *dazzling* set of white teeth. No, she doesn't see herself as a groupie.

Nicole: "The players feel that we are behind them. That's why we are very important for the team."

Just how important is explained by Hartmut Winter, a member of the opposing Baden-Württemberg team this day: "I have to concentrate so much on playing that I don't even notice the girls. They are only there for the spectators."

Karin explains the tactics: "We inspire the spectators so they can give the team inspiration."

Theoretically that is what happens. As the group started up with their refrain, "Let's go," some spectators in the grandstand did go after a while — to the beer kiosk.

Then the stadium announcer wanted *to help*: "The more you inspire the cheerleaders, the more they will show you." However, the wind just didn't want to lift the tiny *skirts*. Perhaps the somewhat subdued state of animation was because of the spectators' lack of English. "We like it," cried the girls. That may be, but why in English? Nicole: "It sounds just terrible in German." In the end, the main ground for the girls to be cheerleaders was because it was "something different." Petra says: "It is the only chance, as a woman, to be able to take part in football." Well, what about a league for women? "That would be too tough," says Anke. "I would rather do jazz dance." And she rejects soccer in any case: "Everybody's into soccer."

The cheer team has had to finance itself for the 10 years of its existence. It has even been enthusiastic enough to get involved in the alien code itself, soccer.

When the professional soccer club, MSV Duisburg, decided it wanted to do its followers a favour, it invited the girls along. They were well received, but they had difficulty following the game: "We can't influence soccer at all. We can't even follow what they're trying to do."

Also, "Müller vor, noch ein Tor (Müller's there, it's a goal)" sounds pretty good in German.

Heike says, convinced: "There's no brawling at American football." Brawny legs on the field, beautiful legs next to them.

Petra says: "We also see ourselves as athletes." Heike: "We'll make our presence felt in Germany as well."

In America, cheerleading has been a professional business for a long time. Probably because they know English so well.

The Pantherettes now want to attend a training camp in America.

Elmar Brümmer

(Stuttgarter Nachrichten, 7 August 1989)

The razzmatazz before the razzle-dazzle.

(Photo: Baumann)

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has had the sound system renewed over the past few months. He said that everything was now in stereo and Dolby sound.

This is investment in an uncertain future, so uncertain that he has not had installed the upholstered seating which he has acquired — the first upholstered seating ever for the "Berli." The seats are piled together in a corner of the auditorium.

Will the "Berli" become a furniture warehouse then? "It would be a shame," Jansen said. Perhaps the protection of historical monuments people would be of his opinion.

Jochen Arntz

(Kölner Stadt-Anzeiger, Cologne, 14 August 1989)

Old crankshafts never die, they just gyrate away

There are car buffs and there are real car buffs. The first are rated pretty lowly by the second: "They're just clowns who think about things like tuning and spoilers."

The genuine old-car freaks are those who wallow in nostalgia. They have lost their souls to retired breeds of racing car — names and images from the 30s, 40s and 50s.

The real freaks are prepared to crawl miles over broken glass to get their hands on an valve made in the 1930s. Authenticity means everything.

The more serious of the real freaks are collectors who keep oldtimers stowed away in barns or air-conditioned cellars.

Sometimes, these old rarities do see the light of day. Now, for example, at the 17th AvD (Automobilclub von Deutschland) Oldtimer-Grand-Prix at the Nürburgring, where the old days once again came to life.

Powerful Bentleys with sparkling spoked wheels, blazing red Ferraris and deep-blue Bugattis beaming between the ancient Mercedes, Porches and Maseratis vie for price of place. And 50,000 spectators are appropriately impressed and respectful. The sky over the track is bright blue as the field lines up for the first race of the day. Pole position is held by the fastest in practice, 12 Lotus Elans. Behind them is an Alfa, then the first of the Porches. The black-and-white checkered flag comes down and off they go with an earsplitting roar. They have 10 circuits to complete. There are a series of races and the announcements are drowned out by the youthful revving of the old motors. The races generally start in the traditional Le Mans manner, with drivers running across the track to reach their vehicles.



In search of authenticity.

(Photo: AvD)

In the pits, there is not that much ado. Friends and occasionally wives or girlfriends, help out. Everyone helps everyone else and the public, an authoritative one, is even allowed into the hallowed area of the drivers' enclosure, where normally no one is allowed.

The entire meeting is much like a large family gathering where everyone can get a whiff of the past. The atmosphere is nonchalant and relaxed. There is no stress.

Neither is there the fear of being braked out of the race by remote control, as can happen these days in Formula One races.

What does it matter if one or two drivers make their fastest circuit with their vehicle attached to the towing bar of the tow truck?

The races are not the only thing. Much more interesting is the admiration and pride as the mostly older men drive their historic car through the milling crowds of onlookers.

There is Jacob Lauer with his "Flying Cigar". The 70-year-old has taken part in every old-time grand prix since 1977. Years ago he took the chassis of a DKW F 8, created the bodywork out of an aircraft fuel tank and built in a 20 horsepower motor.

Engineer Joos Tollenaar bought a decrepit Lola MK III and spent years doing it up. He decided it would be a pity to keep it hidden away in a garage, so he began racing it. It is believed to be the world's only complete Lola.

On the Saturday, Coys of Kensington (London), which is *the* British auction for old-time cars, opened its tent. Auctioned was everything and anything, from Alfa to Williams, that has a name in the business.

But presence was not a prerequisite. One person, whose name was not revealed, made an offer from his yacht out in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean — by satellite telephone.

On this evening, 30 million marks changed hands; only a quarter of the cars offered were returned without being sold.

One 56-year-old Alfa Romeo 8C 2,300 Le Mans brought 4.8 million marks. A snip.

Heinz-R. Schelka

(Die Welt, Bonn, 7 August 1989)